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THE LOGE IN AUCASSIN ET NICOLETTE

By Wayne Conner

THE day following her escape from her tower prison, Nicolette, after a brief encounter with some shepherds, takes an old path into the depths of the forest. Near a crossroads she builds a bower (*loge*), which is discovered by Aucassin that night as he comes in search of his sweetheart. Realizing it is the handiwork of Nicolette, he stops there to rest "out of love for her,"¹ thus passing the test which—unknown to him—Nicolette has set him.² She comes out of her hiding-place nearby and the lovers are happily united. There is no need to dwell on the charm of this episode. The present paper will deal with a number of more controversial aspects: details of construction of the *loge*, the importance of the *loge*, and its relationship to certain incidents in other medieval works.

That lovers should meet in a bower is assuredly not unusual. What distinguishes our example is the love test and the fact that no rendezvous is arranged. D. Scheludko has noted that love tests are a common motif in popular poetry (Volksdichtung).³ But he gives no example in which entry into a bower constitutes the test; and no instance where, as in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, the test serves as a device to bring together lovers separated against their will. Very recently, Kaspar Rogger has endeavored to make evident the "croyances mythologiques ou folkloriques" imbedded in the *chantefable*.⁴ His view is that in constructing her bower Nicolette is trying magic means to compel Aucassin to appear: "l'oracle d'amour serait donc une forme atténuée de l'ancienne croyance selon laquelle la ramée était censée exercer une contrainte magique et inéluctable."⁵ In contrast to this stress on popular tradition, some have felt that the *loge* derives directly from another literary work. Long ago Hugo Brunner adduced, as support for his thesis that *Floire et Blancheflor* served as the model for *Aucassin et Nicolette*, the parallel between reunion in the flowery arbor and Floire's reaching Blancheflor hidden in a basket of flowers.⁶ There are also differences, which he did not point out (his discussion is

1. *Aucassin et Nicolette, chantefable du XIII^e siècle*, ed. Mario Roques (Paris, 1936), XXIV, 78-80. References here will be to this edition.

2. XIX, 9-11, 17-22. The test itself is an outgrowth of Aucassin's claim (XIV, 17-18) that he loves her more than she loves him.

3. "Zur Entstehungsgeschichte von *Aucassin und Nicolette*," ZRP, XLII (1922), 468-469. So also *Aucassin und Nicolette. Kritischer Text mit Paradigmen und Glossar von Hermann Suchier. Zehnte Auflage bearbeitet von Walther Suchier* (Paderborn, 1932), p. XXIX. This edition will be referred to here as Suchier.

4. See his important study "Etude descriptive de la *chantefable Aucassin et Nicolette*," ZRP, LXVII (1951), 409-457 and LXX (1954), 1-58.

5. Pp. 6-7. Rogger's main argument is the location of the bower by a crossroads (cf. n. 35, below).

6. *Über Aucassin und Nicolette* (Halle, 1880), p. 11.

brief): in *Floire et Blancheflor* there is no love test; moreover, it is the man (the pursuer) and not the girl who contrives the meeting, the basket being a ruse (of oriental origin) for gaining access to the harem.⁷ Little importance has been attached to Brunner's arbor-basket parallel, and no one seems to have realized that it can be exploited further. The means are furnished, as we shall see, by the particular flowers used.

Consider now the exact composition of Nicolette's bower:

Ele prist des flors de lis
et de l'erbe du garris
et de le foille autresi,
une bele loge en fist,
ainques tant gente ne vi. (XIX, 12-16)

Later references are in very similar terms: "Nicolette eut faite le loge . . . molt bele et mout gente, si l'ot bien forree dehors et dedens de flors et de foilles" (XX, 1-3); and "... defors et dedens et par deseure et devant de flors, et estoit si bele que plus ne pooit estre" (XXIV, 74-75). The omission of *branches* from the list of materials has disturbed some readers, notably Suchier: how can you build a bower without branches?⁸ A solution has been sought by interpreting the troublesome *garris* as a Provençal term (*garric*, etc.) 'kind of oak or holly'.⁹ As the setting is Southern France, it is indeed tempting to accept *garris* as Provençal; and even some of those who prefer 'moor' to Suchier's translation are nevertheless convinced that *garris* offers a touch of local color if not an indication that the author had been to the South of France.¹⁰ However, the suffix of *garris* (-icius), spelling inconsistencies (*g*- might still represent *j*-), and the fact that *garris* would be the normal Picard form for Fr. *jarris* are factors that practically rule out a Provençal origin.¹¹ Perhaps the biggest stumbling-block to Suchier's rendering is that *erbe* can hardly mean 'foliage'.¹² It clearly means 'grass' just as it does in the passage—with the same sequence: fleurs-herbe(s)-feuille(s)—where Nicolette bandages Aucassin's shoulder: "et puis si prist des flors et de l'erbe fresce et des fuelles verdes, si le loia sus au pan de sa cernisse" (XXVI, 12-14). Accordingly most critics and editors have been content with the pronouncement made by Gaston Paris in reviewing Suchier's first edition—"De l'erbe du garris ne peut signifier 'des branches

7. J. W. Spargo, *Virgil the Necromancer* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp. 139 ff.

8. Suchier, p. 47, note.

9. See Suchier, glossary and note to this line.

10. Hermann Sauter, *Wortgut und Dichtung. Eine lexikographisch-literargeschichtliche Studie über den Verfasser der altfranzösischen Cantefable "Aucassin et Nicolette"* (Münster, 1934), pp. 8-9. See also Suchier, pp. XXII, XXXIX; Roques, p. XII.

11. John Orr, review of Sauter in *MLR*, XXXI (1936), p. 97; Walther von Wartburg, *FEW*, s.v. *carra, n. 9.

12. This editor (pp. 46-47), did not make his task easier by construing both *foille* of v. 14 and *erbe* of v. 13 with *garris*; to consider *foille* as independent of *garris* seemed to him inconsistent with the preceding "exact" indications (*erbe du garris*, *flors de lis*).

de houx'; *garris* veut dire ici 'lande';¹³—though this meaning 'lande,' common for the fem. *jarrie* (Prov. *garriga*), is not clearly attested for the masc. form *garris* (*jarris*). From his rich resources Von Wartburg has apparently been able to find for the masc. type *jarris* ('houx; bâton de houx,' Old French and Picard) only one example with the sense 'lande,' that of our text.¹⁴ An extension of meaning 'houx' > 'lande' (paralleling that of the fem. collective *jarrie-garriga*) would be understandable.¹⁵ But the question does not yet seem perfectly resolved. Rogger—who, incidentally, has consulted Von Wartburg¹⁶—has no solution to offer, and in his vocabulary analysis is forced to put *garris* in two series.¹⁷ He himself is not disturbed by the difficulty, feeling that it is enough that the word should stimulate the listener's imagination.¹⁸ While appreciating the charm of a rare word, one may justifiably wonder whether, after all, *garris* may not simply be a scribal error for *larris*. Not that the copyist of the only extant manuscript was bad, though he wrote with some haste.¹⁹ But *larris* is so well attested in the sense 'lande,' 'terrain en friche'—as well as in its earlier sense 'pente de colline' (< *latericius)—and is so widely used (often in assonance) in several genres, including the *pastourelle*²⁰ of which the whole forest incident is reminiscent, that the possibility of a scribal slip is worth considering.

Let us turn now from the "grass of the moor" to a more interesting and more important detail, the lilies. If Hermann Suchier had thought a little more about them, he might not have clung so steadfastly to his interpreta-

13. *Rom.*, VIII (1879), p. 291. The context is so clear that already in 1856, in their *Nouvelles françaises en prose du XIII^e siècle*, L. Moland and C. d'Héricault gloss *garris* as 'terre inculte, en bruyère.'

14. *FEW*, s.v. **carra*, II, 2. For the fem. form, OF *jarrie* (Prov. *garriga*) 'terre inculte,' see II, 1, b.

15. Apparently Von Wartburg accepts this extension of meaning in this form (*jarris-garris*), while rejecting the possibility for the Southern forms (see his n. 9).

16. He is among those thanked (p. 411) for their helpful criticism. *Garris* is the kind of difficulty about which it would be natural to consult Von Wartburg (his *FEW* article on *garris* was in print by 1940).

17. With words like *feuille*, and with those like *champ* (p. 427).

18. "Cette fameuse herbe du *garris* n'est autre chose qu'une source féconde d'images que l'auditeur formera lui-même: nul besoin de savoir ce qu'il en est au juste, de cette herbe énigmatique" (p. 416). Cf. p. 442: it is not surprising that the two words which have resisted all attempts at explanation (*miramie* and *garris*) are found in verse.

19. Roques, pp. XXVI, XXVIII; Suchier, p. X.

20. In his long study (*Rom.*, XLIX [1923]) Faral includes (pp. 254-255) among the typical *pastourelle* settings three examples of *larris* (none for *garris* or *jarrie*): "joste un lairis," "en un lairis," "les un larris." This brief extract (quoted by La Curne de Sainte-Palaye, *Dictionnaire historique*, s.v. *laris*) from one of Froissart's poems also shows that *larris* is not out of place in a woodland setting:

Mon chemin pris
Parmi un bois tout au lone d'uns larris:
Car la chantoient et marles et mauvis
Et le tres doule rosignols seignouris
Moult doucement.

tion of *garris*. The lilies show beyond a doubt that we are not asked to visualize a realistic shelter (remember, also, the kind of bandage Nicolette prepared for her lover, in the passage already quoted). Scheludko remarks in passing that Nicolette's *loge* is "keine romantische Erfindung," but "ist dem Leben entnommen"; and he quotes from two Old French texts in which forest shelters are built.²¹ The essential fact, however, is that Nicolette does not make the bower *primarily* as a shelter. Her first night alone, as well as the period of waiting for Aucassin the next night, she spends hiding in a "thick bush" (XVIII, 4; XX, 3). The tone of the whole episode is idyllic, not realistic. It is not the essentials, but the trimmings that are mentioned, all that is characteristic of Nicolette and will make the bower an unmistakable marker for her lover. For it is something more than "divination instinctive"²² that reveals to Aucassin who has constructed the bower: it is bedecked with lilies, which I take to be Nicolette's signature-flower.

This explanation of the remarkable detail of the lilies is very different from others which have been advanced. Commenting on the unrealistic nature of Nicolette's "love nest," Sauter (page 9) has observed that the author does not always choose carefully the words he uses in series, and that the verse form—"Reimzwang der *i*- Assonanz"—may have helped determine the materials of the *loge*. Rogger's discussion of the influence of form is much broader. Structural harmony, he believes, requires that the lily, mentioned in section XI, reappear in XIX "par parallélisme." More important is "la licence du vers lyrique"; in poetry, truth is of a different order, and a picturesque or symbolical detail may have prominence, no matter how *invraisemblable*. So it is that the building of the *loge* is narrated in a *laisse* "où le charme lyrique désarme la critique." Like the lions (in XVII), the lilies—obviously out of place in a forest—are not mentioned in the prose sections.²³ It is indeed true that the lilies figure in our manuscript only in verse (and in rhyme). Yet the line of demarcation between prose and verse sections cannot be made too sharp. Contrary to Rogger's statement, for example, a lion is mentioned in prose (XVIII, 26); and it is quite conceivable that the detail of the *lis* (in *flors de lis*), now absent from the prose references to the *loge* (*flors* only, in XX, 3 and XXIV, 75), was originally present in them as it still is in XIX, 12 (*flors de lis*), in the far more stable rhyme position.

In any case, to appreciate the full significance of the lilies in Nicolette's

21. P. 468, note. Scheludko speaks of the *loge* as composed of "flowers and branches." For Amaury Duval, writing in 1838 (*Histoire littéraire de la France*, XIX, 755), the *loge* was a practical shelter and nothing more. Similarly, Gröber (*Grundriss*, II, 1, 529) refers to it as a "Lagerstätte."

22. Myrrha Lot-Borodine, *Le Roman idyllique au moyen âge* (Paris, 1913), p. 115.

23. Rogger, pp. 2, 3, 40, 440, 442. As for details like lions and lilies, E. R. Curtius has shown (see the chapter "Die Ideallandschaft" in his *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* [Bern, 1948]) that medieval nature descriptions are in general not realistic but follow rhetorical tradition.

bower, it is essential to remember their only other occurrence in the work, when Aucassin addresses Nicolette in XI, 12 ("Nicolette, flors de lis") and 32 ("Doce amie, flors de lis"). As is well known, the lily is a figure frequently used by medieval authors in describing female beauty. Examples come readily to mind: Machaut's rondeau "Blanche com lys, plus que rose vermeille." Or what Chrétien says of Enide:

Plus ot, que n'est la flors de lis,
Cler et blanc le front et le vis.²⁴

Accordingly some, like Scheludko (page 486) see in Aucassin's "flors de lis" only a conventional epithet of the type "o le cler vis." Certainly the expression is not unusual, though it is far fresher (it is the only metaphor) than the many others such as "douce amie" found in the *chanteable*. But I feel that literary convention is an inadequate explanation here, just as factors of form cannot alone account for the lilies of the bower. The lily is the only flower named in the description of the *loge*, and one of the few mentioned in the whole work. When the term is used of Nicolette, it is not the author describing, using similes, as in "lé levretes vremelletes plus que n'est cerisse ne rose el tans d'esté" (XII, 21-22), or "et les flors des *margerites* qu'ele ronpoit as ortex de ses piés, qui li gissoient sor le menuisse du pié par deseure, estoient droites noires avers ses piés et ses ganbes" (XII, 25-28). It is Aucassin addressing his sweetheart, at moments when a name or pet name would come naturally to his lips: "Nicolette, flors de lis . . ." and (after relating how she cured the pilgrim, he resumes) "Doce amie, flors de lis . . ." In my view then, *fleur de lis* as used here is more than a conventional term. It is also a nickname or pet name—something, say, like the modern "Honey" or "Baby" (also conventional!)—which Aucassin must have been in the habit of using when alone with Nicolette. When, therefore, she wished clearly but discreetly to indicate to Aucassin that she was near, she could not do better than use, as a kind of signature, the flower that was also her name. Rogger has the merit of realizing that the lilies must have a special meaning. But to make this flower the symbol of Woman (page 422), rather than of one particular woman, seems to me wide of the mark. In accordance with his thesis that the fundamental idea of the work is "l'amour émanant de la femme parfaite, qui a—ex definitione—le pouvoir de guérir,"²⁵ Rogger believes that "le lis symbolise la nature sublime de la femme" (in contrast to the rose which represents passion and Nicolette's "tourment amoureux"), and that "Aucassin associe la blancheur du lis à l'image de sa bien-aimée" (page 11). It is perhaps Rogger's preoccupation with the folklore background of the

24. *Erec*, vv. 427-428. Cf. also "pulchrior liliis" of the *Carmina Burana*, no. 115 (ed. A. Hilka and O. Schumann).

25. P. 55; cf. also pp. 6, 8. As regards the central idea, contrast Leo Spitzer's cogent remarks in *MP*, XLV (1947), 8-14: the *chanteable* expresses the claims of youth and love against the older generation.

chantefable that has made him overlook other well-known examples in which a flower symbolizes an individual woman.

Now Nicolette's lily is also the flower of *Floire et Blancheflor*. In this romance the title characters are represented by flowers, Floire by a rose (to reach his sweetheart he hides in a basket of *his* flowers, just as Nicolette makes a bower of *her* flowers), Blancheflor by a lily. Thus, in describing the figures on the tomb erected to convince Floire of Blancheflor's death, the poet says:

Et li ymage Blanceflor
Devant Floire tint une flor.
Devant son ami tint la bele
Une rose d'or fin novele;
Floire li tint devant le vis
D'or une blanche flor de lis.²⁶

Other similarities between *Aucassin et Nicolette* and *Floire et Blancheflor* have often been pointed out. My interpretation of the lilies of the *chantefable* brings the two works even closer, though the new flower-name link cannot, of course, resolve the vexed question of the relationship between these works. Without going into this problem of literary history, which is not my concern here, I would remark that one may consider (and this is only one of the possibilities) Nicolette's nickname as a modification of an earlier version in which the heroine's "real" name was Blancheflor or Fleur de lis.²⁷

There is another medieval romance, better known even than *Floire et Blancheflor*, which bears a remarkable resemblance to some features of the bower episode. This is the Tristan story. I am not referring to the Forest Life interlude, though this offers an interesting contrast: by a playful reversal of roles (as in the Torelore section), Nicolette prepares for her lover a pretty nest, as Tristan had made for Iseut a more practical shelter:

Sa loge fait; au branc qu'il tient
Les rains tranche, fait la fullie;
Yseut l'a bien espés jonchie.²⁸

One could easily find other Tristan echoes in the *chantefable*,²⁹ but what I

26. *Floire et Blancheflor, poèmes du XIII^e siècle*, ed. E. Du Ménil (Paris, 1856), vv. 567-572 of the older ("aristocratic") version.

27. Fleur de lis seems less common than Blancheflor. A development Blancheflor (name) > Fleur de lis (nickname) would be the reverse of the one (Blancheflor a translation of the Greek term for 'fleur de lis') suggested by Du Ménil (*Floire et Blancheflor*, introd., p. CXLIX). Du Ménil, incidentally, seems to have felt that the use of *fleur de lis* in *Aucassin et Nicolette* was in some way unusual, for after noting that "La beauté de la fleur de lys était passée en proverbe," he quotes XI, 32 ("Doce amie, flors de lis") with the comment "Aucassin disait même [italics mine] à Nicolette. . . ."

28. Bérout, vv. 1290-1292. Suchier (p. 47) cites another passage (vv. 1801-1802) of this forest episode as proof that branches were necessary for a *loge*.

29. Rogger (p. 16) has listed a number of "affinités."

have in mind is the means Tristan uses to inform Iseut that he is nearby in the forest and longs to see her. In the various versions of the legend several devices are used as signals: Tristan shoots a twig into the mane of Iseut's horse at a prearranged spot along the road; or sends down, along a stream flowing through or past Iseut's chamber, chips that are fashioned in a distinctive way, bearing a five-pointed cross, or carved with runes or the initials T and I.³⁰ But the closest parallel, the one most rewarding to consider in the present context, is found in Marie de France's *Lai du chevrefoil*. In this *lai* Tristan has secretly returned from exile and is hiding in the woods, eager to arrange a meeting with Iseut. He leaves a hazel stick, with his name carved on it, by the forest road which Iseut must take on her way to a feast at Tintagel. The Queen passes, sees the stick, understands at once, stops her train and withdraws into the forest to meet her lover. Here, as in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, a signal is placed along the forest path which the loved one must follow; the time and place for the signal have not been prearranged; the signal is unusual and poetic, based on the same kind of comparison-equation: *fleur de lis* = Nicolette, *coudre* = Tristan (with the complement *chèvrefeuille* = Iseut). The image of the hazel and the honeysuckle is far more striking and Tristan's signature is explicit. Few would question the superiority of Marie's lay. Its interpretation, however, has been much more difficult.³¹ Perhaps in this matter *Aucassin et Nicolette* can provide us with some help from a new quarter. The main problem has been: did Tristan actually carve his message on the hazel stick (Schoepperle, Frank), or did he simply inscribe his name trusting Iseut to divine all that he wished to say (Spitzer, Hatcher)? Or did he send his message by letter a few days before, reminding Iseut to be on the lookout for the signal which had been used on a former occasion (Lucien Foulet)?³² It seems to me that the bower episode gives added weight to the arguments of those critics³³ who feel that a warning letter is unnecessary and even detrimental artistically. The episode suggests also that the Spitzer-Hatcher interpretation is essentially the correct one. Aucassin and Iseut may not have detailed instructions about what to look for and where—a characteristic that sets these two stories apart.³⁴ Yet the

30. Gertrude Schoepperle, *Tristan and Isolt. A Study of the Sources of the Romance*, I, 42, 139; 147-149.

31. See especially Lucien Foulet, *ZRP*, XXXII (1908), 278-280; Schoepperle, I, 138-147; Leo Spitzer, *Rom.*, LXIX (1946-47), 80-90; Grace Frank, *PMLA*, LXIII (1948), 405-411; Anna Granville Hatcher, *Rom.*, LXXI (1950), 330-344. In a more recent article (known to me only by István Frank's review in *Rom.*, LXXV [1954], 131-132), Ana-Maria Valero has proposed that *nun* (v. 54) be interpreted as 'message' (<nuntiu) rather than as 'name,' the message (carved on the four sides of the hazel stick) consisting then of the famous lines 77-78.

32. Among other scholars who share Foulet's view that Tristan sent Iseut a preparatory letter one should mention E. Hoepffner (*Les Lais de Marie de France* [Paris, 1935], p. 134) and A. Ewert (edition of the *Lais* [Oxford, 1947], p. 184).

33. Notably Schoepperle, Frank, Spitzer, Hatcher.

34. See Schoepperle I, 142 ff. (*Aucassin et Nicolette* does not figure in this discussion).

success of the signals is certainly not a matter of chance. They are set where there is reason to believe the right persons—alert lovers—will discover them: near a crossroads where seven roads meet,³⁵ and in an open spot along the road Iseut must follow. Tristan, moreover, has previously used this signal with Iseut. And Aucassin in pursuit of a “beast” should be ready to track it to its “lair.”³⁶ As important as the lovers’ alertness (cf. *Chevrefoil*, v. 56) is their ability to understand à demi-mot what to others would be meaningless. We all know how impossible it is for outsiders to understand our family jokes, while for us a word or allusion is enough to evoke some past event and bring quick laughter. The situation in these two works is rather analogous. Aucassin recognizes the *loge* as Nicolette’s handiwork when he sees the lilies, since in the past he has compared her to a *fleur de lis* and even made of the term a pet name for her. Likewise, Iseut knows Tristan has left the stick, not only because it bears his name but because the stick is hazel and the hazel-honeysuckle comparison has for some time belonged to their own special lover’s vocabulary. These are not arbitrary signals (contrast the chips) but expressive and identifying symbols (“Your *Fleur de lis* is here,” “Your *Coudre* is here”) immediately understandable to the lovers because they are charged with a wealth of associations from the past. This is the importance of the “autre feiz” (*Chevrefoil*, v. 57).³⁷ Precisely because it is not the first time that the image has been used—and even employed in a signal—Tristan can dispense with any warning letter and entrust the “message” to his name alone.

Nicolette’s bower occupies a central position in the *chanteable*. An unusual structure in an unusual work, its full significance has not been

35. XIX, 6-8. In the choice of this site Rogger sees (p. 7) not a concern for *vraisemblance*, but the influence of an old folk belief that crossroads were the most favorable station for girls wishing to charm their lovers into appearing. Nicolette, he says (p. 2), cannot reasonably expect that Aucassin will pass near her bower since she has set no rendezvous and must even suppose he is still a prisoner.

36. The shepherds relay to Aucassin Nicolette’s broad hint that there is in the forest a valuable *beste* which, if he can catch it within three days, will cure him of his malady (XVIII, XXII). It would not be counter to the spirit of the work to consider the *loge*—so also Aucassin’s pretense that he has lost his greyhound (XXIV, 40)—as a sort of playful extension of the *beste* metaphor. The folklore background of this metaphor has often been emphasized (see especially Rogger, pp. 9-10, and H. V. Velten, *Rom.*, LVI [1930], 282-288), but perhaps the most interesting parallel is to be found not in popular but in courtly literature. In the allegorical *Dit de la panthère d’amours* (late thirteenth century), the lover follows a panther to its *fosse*, and the equation animal with marvellous curative powers = beloved is combined, as in *Aucassin et Nicolette*, with the conceit that love is a sickness and the lady is doctor or medicine.

37. Professor Frank (p. 406) thinks Marie is alluding here to the chips-on-the-stream episode. This interpretation I find unconvincing, though I realize that from the historical point of view both the twig-shooting signal (which Professor Frank does not mention, but which Foulet, p. 281, thinks is probably Marie’s starting point) and the hazel are to be considered as variations on the chips theme (cf. E. Hoepffner, p. 135).

appreciated. The *loge* is far from being a practical shelter. It is much more than the conventional arbor of young lovers, more even than "une sorte de lit de nocces" (as Rogger once terms it). Figuratively, it is the lair of a precious "beast." Above all, it is at once love test, poetic symbol, and signed message. These latter aspects I hope to have illumined here. In them, as in so many other instances, our anonymous author shows that he was well acquainted with the literary traditions of his time.³⁸

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38. To supplement my interpretation of Nicolette's lilies, I should like to add a brief reference to a modern work of fiction. Although Proust is more famous for the procedure of identifying or associating particular flowers with certain women characters (cf. Rosemarie Burkart, "Frau und Blume bei Proust," *Archivum Romanicum*, XV [1931], 99-108), Honoré de Balzac provides a notable illustration in his *Le Lys dans la vallée*. The heroine of this novel is the *lys* (*Œuvres complètes*, ed. Marcel Bouteron and Henri Longnon, XXVI, 100, 143, 167), and is once (p. 181) addressed by her young lover in these words (cf. "Nicolette, flors de lis..."): "Henriette, idole dont le culte l'emporte sur celui de Dieu, *lys*, fleur de ma vie, comment ne savez-vous donc plus, vous qui êtes ma conscience, que je me suis si bien incarné à votre cœur que mon âme est ici quand ma personne est à Paris?"

LORENZO DE' MEDICI AND MARSILIO FICINO:
AN EXPERIMENT IN PLATONIC FRIENDSHIP

By James B. Wadsworth

A PROFOUND sense of a Providentially-inspired mission underlies Ficino's endeavors to found a philosophical school.¹ On him had fallen the task of explaining to erring mankind the true way to love: "Il sommo Amore della Provvidenza divina . . . spirò in Grecia una castissima donna . . . Socrate rivelò questo sacro misterio al nostro Platone: Platone . . . un libro . . . ne compose. Io per rimedio de' Latini il libro di Platone di greca lingua in latina tradussi; e confortato dal nostro magnifico Lorenzo, i misteri, che in detto libro erano più difficili, commentai . . ."² In the commentary to which he refers, the *Liber de amore*, Ficino never loses sight of the usefulness of the love he is advocating. In his concern for the salvation of men's souls, he does not neglect the practical problems of promoting ethical conduct. There is a pedagogue in Ficino as well as a philosopher. This point of view is discussed early in the commentary, in a chapter on the advantages of love.³ Its advantages may be summed up in a single benefit: all laws and teachings are slow to enforce moral conduct; love produces it in a moment. Since love is the desire for the beautiful, seekers after it necessarily avoid the ugly, the base and the obscene. Furthermore "si duo aliqui se mutuo diligunt . . . a turpibus abstinant. Prout sibi invicem placere conantur, magnifica semper ardenti studio aggrediuntur ne contemptui amato sint, sed amoris uicissitudine digni putentur" (II, 1323). Socratic love between two men thus promises to bring forth the highest and the noblest in human nature.⁴

The final chapter of the Commentary proper⁵ shows beyond all doubt that Ficino considered that the new doctrine he was revealing had a practical application in worldly affairs. In considering the usefulness of this Socratic love, he imagines a new Socrates who shall have one great task, the prevention of the corruption of youth. This is a patriotic duty upon which Ficino insists. Youth is safe from contagion in the hands of

1. P. O. Kristeller, *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. Virginia Conant (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), p. 285.

2. Marsilio Ficino, *Sopra lo Amore ovvero Convito di Platone*, ed. G. Rensi (Lanciano: R. Carabba, n.d.), pp. 13-14. This statement of purpose appears in the letter of dedication of Ficino's Italian translation of the *Liber de amore*, his commentary on the *Symposium*. Quotations from the Commentary itself will be given from the Latin text found in *Opera omnia*, 2nd ed. (Basiliae: apud Henricum Petri, 1576), II, 1320-1361.

3. *Oratio* I, 4, "De utilitate amoris."

4. The term "Socratic love" has been retained, Ficino speaking of "Platonic love" only at a later date. See Kristeller, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

5. *Oratio* VII, 16, "Quam utilis amor Socraticus." Chapter 17 is a prayer of thanksgiving.

parents and tutors; as soon as it is released from such constraints, it falls a prey to flatterers and is corrupted. The new Socrates cannot make laws; even if he could, they would not be obeyed. There is only one means possible, the companionship of Socrates himself. He, the true lover, will neglect everything to win over youth by his pleasing companionship. Then he will undertake its reformation. "Ita illaqueatos, monet deinde severius. Postremo censura rigidiori castigat" (II, 1362).

There is a clear distinction in Ficino's mind between the Socrates of the *Symposium* and this new Socrates whose duties towards his fellow-men are limited to saving young men susceptible to flattery, who have just escaped parental and pedagogical supervision. It is noteworthy that the earliest manuscript of the *De amore* bears the date of July 1469.⁶ The work was thus in all probability composed at a time when Ficino's pupil, Lorenzo de' Medici, in his twentieth year, was taking over the reins of Florence. This coinciding of contemporary fact with theory would strongly suggest that in composing the *De amore*, Ficino cast himself in the role of the new Socrates vis-a-vis Lorenzo. Beyond a general patriotic motivation, there is no hint of any political interest. Ficino's aim was the exercise of spiritual influence⁷. He makes striking promises to those who follow the Socratic love which he offers to mankind. This chapter seems to reflect, in fact, a fear on Ficino's part of the influences for evil now beginning to surround his pupil and a bid to continue to exercise a spiritual influence upon Lorenzo. This can be no more than a supposition; yet later writings of the two men tend to support it. Underlying this chapter on the usefulness of Socratic love there are surely a specific fear and a hope.

II

Of the various ways in which Ficino sought to disseminate his teachings, by friendly discussion, in sermons, in formal writings, one in particular merits attention. It is the amatory letter, a literary genus the underlying philosophy of which has been excellently analysed by Professor Kristeller.⁸ In it the general doctrines of the *De amore* are translated into the personal terms of a friendship between two individuals. Ficino's correspondence has preserved a number of such epistolary friendships. It includes an exchange between Lorenzo and Ficino which does not seem to have received the attention it deserves.⁹

6. See P. O. Kristeller, *Supplementum Ficinianum* (Florence: L. S. Olschki, 1937) I, CXXIII-CXXVI, for the dating of the Latin and Italian texts.

7. The Proemium to the commentary, setting forth the conditions under which this revival of the Platonic Banquet took place, ascribes a singularly modest role to Ficino. Lorenzo is credited with the initiative "... Laurentius Medices Platonium conuiuium innouaturus ..." and the guests are chosen "... ut musarum numerus impleretur."

8. *Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, pp. 281 ff.

9. The account by A. Della Torre, *Storia dell' Accademia Platonica di Firenze* (Florence: Carnesecchi, 1902), pp. 737-741, is superficial and misleading.

As it now appears in the *Opera* of Ficino, this exchange produced a series of twenty letters. Ten are written by Ficino to Lorenzo; four by Lorenzo to Ficino; four by Ficino to Niccolò Michelozzi;¹⁰ two by Ficino to Politian. There are no letters by Michelozzi or Politian. Scattered through thirty-five pages of the *Opera*, mingled with other correspondence on varied subjects, these letters appear to give a running account of an episode in the Socratic friendship between Lorenzo and Ficino for some nine months of 1474.¹¹ In the first letter we meet a Lorenzo, restless, "inquietum", in Saint Augustine's word, yearning for some indefinable comfort from Ficino. At the close of a number of exchanges, some serious, some jocular, we are left with the impression that Lorenzo has accepted the counsels of Ficino, has understood his own nature better and has achieved a certain serenity. The correspondence is thus presented as an exemplar of the Socratic love preached in the *Liber de amore*. It offers a dual interest: a general exemplification of a practical experience of Ficino's philosophy and a more practical insight into the relationships between him and Lorenzo. The following table will serve to cast light on the nature of this correspondence.

No. in Opera	Date	No. by date	Page No. on page	From	To	Contents
1		II	620	Lorenzo	Ficino	From Pisa. Undated. Lorenzo, impatient at lack of letters, complains that Ficino has broken promise to write.
2	13 Jan 1478 (<i>Opera</i>)	III	621, i	Ficino	Lorenzo	Ficino apologizes for delay in thanking Lorenzo for the benefice of San Cristoforo di Nuovoli, granted in 1473 (<i>Supp.</i> II, 332). No mention of promise to write.
	13 Jan 1474 (<i>Supp.</i> I, 26)	IV	621, ii	Lorenzo	Ficino	Acknowledges receipt of #2; refuses thanks and praise as incompatible with their friendship.
4	21 Jan 1474 (<i>Supp.</i> I, 26)	V	622, i	Ficino	Lorenzo	Acknowledges receipt of #3 and gives thanks for Lorenzo's great qualities.
5	21 Jan 1474 (<i>Supp.</i> I, 26)	VI	622, ii	Ficino	Michelozzi	Continues praise of Lorenzo begun in #4: he has all the qualities of his great ancestor Cosimo.
6		VII	622, iii	Lorenzo	Ficino	Complains that his own two letters (#s 1, 3) have received only one reply (#2); suggests that Ficino is too concerned with San Cristoforo to write.
7	23 Jan 1474 (<i>Supp.</i> I, 26)	VIII	623	Ficino	Lorenzo	Acknowledges receipt of #6 and refutes suggestion it contains.

10. Son of the artist and sculptor, at this time Lorenzo's secretary; later chancellor of the republic, 1512-1517. A short account and bibliography are to be found in Kristeller, *Supplementum*, II, 323.

11. There are inconsistencies in the dates of letters as printed in the *Opera*; most disappear in the light of MS evidence. The tabulation of the letters gives this evidence from the *Supplementum Ficinianum*.

No. in Opera	Date	No. by date	Page. No. on page	From	To	Contents
8	1 May 1473 (Supp. I, 27)	I	639, ii	Ficino	Lorenzo	Dated 21 March 1474 in Opera, it answers a letter from Lorenzo; the extent of their mutual affection is to be measured by their impatient desire for letters.
9	21 March 1474 (Supp. I, XCI)	XII	639, iii	Ficino	Politian	Praises Politian's muse and exalts their friendship.
10	21 March 1474 (Supp. I, XCI)	XIII	640, i	Ficino	Michelozzi	Dated 21 March 1478 in Opera. Refers to friendship letters written this day to Lorenzo (Cl. #8) and to Politian (Cl. #9).
11	12 April 1474 (Opera)	XIV	641, i	Ficino	Lorenzo	A sermon on liberality occasioned by a report of Lorenzo's generosity to the poor. No friendship element.
12		XV	641, ii	Ficino	Michelozzi	Appears to refer to #11. Praises Lorenzo for his piety towards God, his compassion for the poor, his beneficence to all. Expresses Ficino's deep affection for him.
13		XVII	646	Ficino	Lorenzo	First letter written after Ficino's illness of the summer (1474). Exhorts Lorenzo to use time well, to strive after a virtuous life.
14	10 Oct 1474 (Opera)	XVIII	647, ii	Lorenzo	Ficino	Grateful acknowledgment of #13; confession of errors and expression of determination to amend his ways. Serious, affectionate tone.
15	22 Sept 1474 (Supp. I, 28: 11 MSS read X Kal Octobris = 22 Sept; 1 MS reads 22 Sept 1474; 1 MS, 22 Sept 1473. Date of #14 must rest on misreading of X Kal Oct).	XIX	648, i	Ficino	Michelozzi	Expression of admiration for Lorenzo's letter (#14); request to Michelozzi to encourage Lorenzo to persevere.
16		XX	648, ii	Ficino	Lorenzo	Praises imitation of a model as superior to the reading of works of ethics in the search for a moral life and proposes Cosimo de' Medici as Lorenzo's model. General in tone, does not refer in detail to previous letters.
17		IX?	649, ii	Ficino	Lorenzo	Playful letter with no reference to previous correspondence except remark that Lorenzo is still in Pisa (Cl. January letters) and a possible reference to the church of San Cristoforo.
18		X?	650, i	Ficino	Politian	Claims he is ashamed of previous letter and asks Politian to read it in such a fashion as to make it acceptable.

No. in Opera	Date	No. by date	Page. No. on page	From	To	Contents
19		XI ?	639, ii	Ficino	Lorenzo	A panegyric of Law and Justice in fulfillment of promise to write made on Nones of March when Lorenzo was leaving Pisa.
20	15 April 1474 (Opera)	XVI	655, iv	Ficino	Lorenzo	Refers to a letter by Lorenzo (a reply to #11 not reproduced?) refusing Ficino's praises. Ficino explains his motives in praising him directly and in letters to Michelozzi: he wishes to persuade Lorenzo to persist in virtue.

Ficino's work as an editor is clear: the apparent unity of this series is his handiwork. Especially significant in this respect is the letter which is eighth in the series in the *Opera* (I, 639, ii) but is first in chronological order. As the manuscripts show, it was composed eight months earlier than the letter now printed as the first of the group (I, #620). In both content and style it is in complete harmony with the seemingly earlier letters. It reveals that in May, 1474 Lorenzo and Ficino were already exchanging these amatory epistles and that Lorenzo was expressing impatience at the slowness of Ficino's replies ("litteras meas, quae velocissime aduolarunt, expectatissimas appellasti"). This letter is an answer to a previous letter from Lorenzo which Ficino does not reproduce. Furthermore, it takes the place and date of a letter which Ficino tells Michelozzi he has written to Lorenzo on 21 March 1474 (See #10). A second example of editing is the placing at the end of the series of a letter written according to the date it bears in the printed edition in April 1474. In this case there is no attempt to conceal the date; its content justifies its position, for it explains and justifies the policy Ficino has followed to an apparently successful conclusion. In effect, Ficino has been pursuing the aims of the new Socrates of the *Liber de amore*: he has sought to admonish Lorenzo and to exhort him to virtue. Placed at the end, it gives an air of successful completion to the group. Lorenzo, we see, has cooperated enthusiastically over a period of at least seventeen months (May 1473–September 1474). Thanks to this, four of his letters have been preserved.

It is already obvious that the correspondence is not in fact made up of a series of consecutive letters. Though it appears to be spread through the first nine months of 1474, it is composed of a number of independent groups. The January letters, the first seven, are a coherent unit, the largest of all such units. It contains three of Lorenzo's letters. The next three (#s 7, 8, 9) appear to form a March group, which is, in fact, an editorial creation. An April group (#s 11, 12) could well be added to the previous group. The second major group, containing the last of Lorenzo's four letters, belongs to the month of September (#s 13, 14, 15, 16). The remaining letters (#s 17, 18, 19, 20) serve as an epilogue. Only one is

datable in any way (#20); the others appear to have been composed in March; but, because of the absence of manuscript information and clear reference to datable letters, this is a probability only. One letter belongs demonstrably to an earlier year; there is nothing to show that these belong to the year 1474. The letters are not a full account of the relationships between Lorenzo and Ficino. We do not find even a complete collection of the letters which passed between the two men in pursuit of what must have been a sincere attempt to institute a new relationship, one based on the practice of Socratic love. It is in this attempt, to be analysed in the January and September groups, that the major interest of the correspondence lies. As a whole it is an artificial collection, an exemplar; in these two small groups a sincere human problem is expressed.

III

Ficino is careful to present Lorenzo as the instigator of the correspondence. Though we know that such letters had been exchanged the previous year, the present series gives the appearance of being a fresh episode. The first letter (#2, I, 620) indicates that before leaving for Pisa, Lorenzo had exacted from Ficino a promise to write in this amatory vein. There is a hint, furthermore, in a letter to Cavalcanti, that Ficino had been deliberately left behind so that this separation might be a spur to their correspondence.¹² The letters of this January group make two further points abundantly clear. Lorenzo is versed in the *De amore*, he is adept at handling its theories and literary mannerisms; he can turn Ficino's own arguments against him. More important, he held high hopes that from this relationship of Socratic love which he was creating between himself and Ficino a double profit would ensue. For himself he must have hoped for some inspiration, some benefit such as the *De amore* promised. He cannot define what he hopes for in precise fashion. His first expression is negative: he is not interested in discussing public or private affairs with Ficino; he seeks something else, an indefinable "*Quaecunque in mentem ueniunt*" (I, 620). Knowing as we do the constancy of Lorenzo's search for peace as a theme which runs through his poetry, we may see here yet another facet of this quest. For a moment, Lorenzo must have hoped that Ficino's doctrine could bring him repose. He saw, too, another consequence.

Ficino failed at first to appreciate the seriousness with which Lorenzo viewed this correspondence, for he failed to reply promptly. His reply, when it came, was no real answer, but an abject expression of thanks for the bestowal on him of the benefice of San Cristoforo (I, 621, i). Lorenzo's answer to this is categorical: such thanks and praise are out of place in this friendship. Consciously using the terminology of the *De amore*, he

12. *Opera*, I, 624, i, to Cavalcanti. Everyone asks Ficino why he is alone in Florence; he replies; "*Quia solum incedere nunc me uult, qui nunquam sinit esse me solum. Nondum redijt ergo? Nondum.*"

clearly indicates that he considers that he and Ficino are equals, united in friendship: "non enim hoc gratiarum genus conuenire uidetur, aut amicitiae nostrae, aut ei uiro qui se ita mihi totum tradiderit, ut nihil sibi reliquerit suum." Granted even the literary nature of this correspondence, this is a striking concession on Lorenzo's part which Ficino never quite dares to accept at face value. Rather does he, in effect, reject the offer while seizing on the permission to speak frankly. We recall that the new Socrates of the *De amore* felt that his patriotic duty was to save the state by saving its children; Ficino here sees his supreme opportunity. Lorenzo is the hope of his motherland, "Patriae spes . . . Instrumentum Dei . . . aptum . . . ad magnifica perpetranda" (I, 622, i). Ficino's letters henceforth in this series will have as their underlying purpose an endeavor to persuade Lorenzo to lead a virtuous life, and to develop the noble potentialities of his nature. Divinely dedicated to the service of Florence, Lorenzo will perform great things if he follows the divine will and seeks divine guidance in prayer (I, 622, i).

Ficino's approach is the flattery Lorenzo forbade at the outset and forbade again in a letter which Ficino does not reproduce, but to which he refers in terms which state his intention succinctly: "In Epistolis Laurentii, quas ad te scripsi, hactenus semper te ita laudavi, ut admonerem similiter, atque exhortarer" (I, 655, iv). Praise and an amusing style are thus means to an end: it would be incorrect to suggest that these are all heavy moral treatises.

On the contrary, Ficino follows his own precepts, for the most part, in this first group of letters, endeavoring to captivate in order to convince. Some of his word-plays¹³ are not in modern taste. In other respects, he displays unquestioned skill at playing with images and conceits. Thus Lorenzo accuses him of allowing St. Christopher to obscure his vision of Lorenzo and so forgetting to write. Christopher, answers Ficino, is transparent: in him he sees Lorenzo, since it is through Lorenzo that he sees and embraces Christopher. The saint does not eclipse Lorenzo. On the contrary, he is struck blind and silent by Lorenzo's corruscating and thundering, i.e. by Lorenzo's personal triumphs. Here Ficino makes his thrust; "Improbe adolescens, ha nimum gaudes uictoria, quamuis honesta. Quid amplius aut tibi aut reliquis est reliqui? Tibi quidem ut te ipsum uincas" (I, 623).

Of the four letters which constitute the group written in the autumn of 1474, three are by Ficino, one by Lorenzo. The tone is very different. In the intervening months Ficino had been dangerously ill, Lorenzo had swung to the opposite pole of his nature and spent the summer unwisely, presumably in dissipation. Ficino has abandoned his playful style for a grave mood, though consciously continuing the spring series. He would

13. "Quid accusas in me, accusator acer, amator acerrime" (p. 623) is a minor specimen.

like, if he might, he says, to write more seriously than usual and then, recalling Lorenzo's permission or rather command, he proceeds to make an eloquent appeal to him to use his time wisely. The letter is, in effect, a short sermon addressed to Lorenzo in person. Only divine truth delights, nourishes, broadens the mind: "Caetera uolantium nugarum deliramenta immortalem non implent mentem, naturali quodam instinctu aeterna et immensa poscentem" (I, 646). Theophrastus, in old age, wept bitterly over waste of time. Cosimo, Lorenzo's grandfather, sighed heavily over such waste. Ficino, therefore, entreats Lorenzo to reject the frivolous and unnecessary and to live wisely: "Obijce, quaeso, inanibus curis, superuacuis ludis, negotijs non necessarijs Socraticum illud" (I, 646). In his fervor, Ficino still retains a grip on realities. He makes a practical request, that Lorenzo should devote one hour of each day to living for himself and not for others: "Utere precor quotidie hora una bene, hoc est ad mentem liberalibus disciplinis alendam, ac tantillum temporis foeliciter tibi ipse uiue" (I, 646). He returns to an argument he has used before: Lorenzo is destined for greater things than vain frivolities; it is his duty to God and his fellows to conduct his life seriously: "Ludis autem iocisque raro parumper indulge: nam et ad maiora, uel potius ad maxima, scio quod loquor, te Deus instituit" (I, 646-7). For a moment the flow of this eloquence is broken. Ficino has or pretends to have, a momentary hesitation: Lorenzo will frown or laugh at these admonitions. He therefore pretends that they apply less to Lorenzo than to himself and mankind in general. The letter ends with a personal appeal foreshadowed by the penultimate chapter of the *De amore*: "Sed volo hoc sigillo hanc epistolam obsignari, neque audias unquam adultores, neque obtrectatores ullos exaudias, quibus maxima quaeque domus abundat." This is apparently no mere formal conclusion, for he elaborates: "Illi tibi oculos mentis eruere, isti manus tuas, id est, amicos amputare conantur" (I, 647). Here is a specific case of the danger Ficino described in the *De amore*.

A pledge of the timeliness and sincerity of this letter is to be found in Lorenzo's reply (I, 647, ii). Previous exchanges betray a certain artificiality on Ficino's part and a certain dissatisfaction on Lorenzo's. The answer now given reveals a preoccupation with style and composition, but it is more than a school exercise. After turning a neat compliment in acknowledging Ficino's letter, Lorenzo concerns himself with a discussion of the friendship which exists between the two, and with advising Ficino on the benefits he himself hopes from the relationship. Its tone is as serious as that of the letter to which it is a reply. As he writes, Lorenzo adopts the language and concepts of Ficino's *Epistola de felicitate*¹⁴ and has abandoned the *De amore*. Their friendship, he says in effect, is unique, something set apart from ordinary friendships. Others who display affection toward him can take delight in riches, honors, pleasures, all of which are

14. *Opera*, I, 662-665.

empty, fleeting, in the power of Fortune: "Quod et tu saepe docuisti, et nos saepius experti sumus" (I, 647). Ficino, on the contrary, has natural gifts of friendship based on God-given virtues. Lorenzo, from the beginning of this correspondence, thus has set Ficino apart from the stream of his ordinary life, as though he were reserving a part of his personality which he hopes this exchange will refresh.

The remainder of the letter sets forth a confession and a hope. He is glad Ficino has recovered his health; he would be even happier if he were to receive letters by which he might recover his own spiritual health. He does not feel that his foolish acts proceed from an evil nature so much as from a certain heedlessness and bad habit: "ego non malignitate sed facilitate potius naturae, ac consuetudine quadam, deliro" (I, 648). It is Ficino's task to use every possible good to set upright Lorenzo's prostrate mind: "Ne desistas ijs omnibus nobiscum stimulis uti, quibus magis prostratam mentem nostram erigi posse existimas. Hoc unum a te contendendo atque expecto, quod nemo te aut libentius uult, aut sapientius monet" (I, 648). Ficino's grave illness, he concludes, has warned him of the risks he ran in so nearly losing "uitae pars altera suae" and he promises to follow his advice, and since he has the human failing of following example rather than reason, to follow Ficino's example and use time as though not one particle were exempt from fear of death.

Ficino's reply to this is indirect: he writes to Niccolo Michelozzi that Lorenzo's answer reveals such gifts as to be a refutation of his accusations of wasted time. This initial compliment, however, is contradicted by Ficino's further grave insistence that Lorenzo has a boundless capacity for great things if he will exercise the will to perform them. "Quod si Patronus, Nicolae, noster in negligentia talis est, ut fuisse diligens uideatur, qualem euasurum putas, si diligentior esse uoluerit et potuerit? . . . non tam opus est obsecrare Deum, ut possit, quam ut uelit" (I, 648). Ficino urges Michelozzi to encourage Lorenzo to diligence "ut breui tantum doctrina superat Latina, quantum autoritate ciues sine controuersia superat" (I, 648).

Lorenzo had concluded his last letter with the remark that humanity follows examples rather than reason: "exemplis potius moueatur quam rationis" and he himself proposes to follow Ficino's example in his use of time: "ego et te, et tempore hac lege utar: tempore, ut nullam cras habituro: te uero ut homine, cui ne punctum quidem temporis superest metu mortis liberum" (I, 648). The peril in which Ficino's life had been that summer serves as a warning to Lorenzo. If Ficino was flattered to be addressed thus, to be called by his *Patronus* "uitae pars altera meae," he does not show it; the profit he draws from this attitude is turned towards Lorenzo. In the final letter of the series (§ 16, I, 648, ii) he seizes on the efficacy of example over words. A long introduction on this theme is followed by an exhortation to follow Cosimo as model. The sincerity and

seriousness of Ficino's purpose are here beyond all question. Deeply indebted and ever grateful to Cosimo, Ficino here depicts his first patron as his ideal, whom Lorenzo has chosen to follow. Most solemnly he recalls that Lorenzo had been present at the death of his grandfather where, having had Ficino read to him Plato "de uno rerum principio, ac de summo bono . . . paulo post decessit tanquam eo ipso bono quod disputatione gustauerat, re ipsa abunde potiturus" (I, 649). Lorenzo must model himself on his great ancestor: "Si aut Deus Cosmum ad ideam mundi formauit, ita te ipse, quemadmodum coepisti, ad ideam Cosmi figura" (I, 649).

IV

It would be wrong to exaggerate the importance of a handful of letters in which two men reveal only a part of their natures. However, certain conclusions stand out. Ficino's attitude to Lorenzo displays a number of facets: playfulness, gravity, flattery, serious concern, humble admiration. After his initial failure to respond, he follows a policy which he himself defines as exhortation to good through praise. Whatever tone he may thereafter adopt, he is, consciously or otherwise, but with personal concern, adopting an attitude towards Lorenzo which is based on his own philosophy of man. The flattery which Lorenzo rejects and which seems so fulsome to us, is susceptible of an explanation on these grounds.

One of the signs of the soul's domination of the body discussed in the thirteenth book of Ficino's *Theologia Platonica* is man's conquest of the world: "Tertium signum, ab artium et gubernationis industria" (I, 295 ff.). This particular chapter becomes a glorification of man and his limitless powers which anticipates Pico's *de dignitate hominis* in many ways. The argument proceeds in three stages. By his arts man shows himself superior to the animal and material worlds. He is thus a kind of God: "est quidam Deus . . . immortalis Dei gerit uicem." Man rises still higher in his ability to govern himself, his family, the state and the whole world. Finally, man rises above the body in the intellectual occupations of the liberal arts which, far from always serving the interests of the body, are contrary to it. Man, however, by understanding the Heavens has the same gifts ("ingenium") as the Creator: man could have created the Heavens had he had the materials and indeed, in a way, does so: "postquam facit eos nunc, licet ex alia materia, tamen persimiles ordine." In his letters to Lorenzo, Ficino proposes an ideal for him to pursue of which Cosimo is the exemplar. It has a remarkable resemblance to that outlined in this chapter of the *Theologia*. Indeed, in many respects, Lorenzo is already Ficino's ideal of humanity: "Instrumentum Dei . . . aptum . . . ad magnifica perpetranda," ruler, diplomat, orator, poet, logician surpassing all others, silencing envy, master of all arts, "artes . . . non labore quaesitas sed et natura subministratas, et a Deo infusas" (I, 623). If in

Cosimo he knew not human but heroic virtue, it is now reborn phoenix-like in Lorenzo. At the same time as he exalts Lorenzo as an almost super-human representative of human potentialities, a realization of the god-like man of the *Theologia*, he is aware of Lorenzo's weaknesses. Hence we are confronted with a double image which must be reconciled; it is as though the ideal Lorenzo were being held up for the real Lorenzo's emulation. Just as Pico will say "Hac nati sumus conditione ut id simus quod esse volumus,"¹⁵ Ficino insists that Lorenzo can create his own destiny by the exercise of his will; he is to pray not so much for power but the will for good. Furthermore, Ficino insists to Lorenzo that he cultivate the liberal arts and begs Michelozzi to see that he pursue these studies. Though the entreaty to lay aside frivolous occupations to devote only one hour a day to this seems at first glance incongruous, Ficino is very much in earnest. As we have seen, by study of the liberal arts, man rises above the body and his soul begins, for a moment, to live without the body. Such a *vacatio*¹⁶ is considered most seriously by Ficino as a degree in the soul's ascent to the Divinity and the soul's striving to become God.

Ficino's letters to Lorenzo thus acquire a serious undertone. His praise of Lorenzo is not simply abject flattery; he is not one of the base flatterers against whom he repeatedly warns. In Lorenzo he sees partly realised and partly to be accomplished an ideal of man. One is in a better position to appreciate the depths that can lurk beneath a phrase: "meus est Laurentius ob incredibilem humanitatem suam." One cannot avoid being struck with this portrait of man such as appears here and such as Pico was to describe him. Pico had read the *Theologia*, of course: he was drawn to Florence by "all the rays of light which streamed from the circle of which Lorenzo was the centre."¹⁷ As the events of the summer of 1474 show, Ficino's idealism was not enough and Lorenzo fell. It is in a closer ideal that Ficino can make a final appeal, the example of Cosimo's life and death in which the two men were emotionally bound together. Here the correspondence stops. Four more letters follow at intervals in the *Opera*, but content and, where given, dates show that they are not closely connected with these September letters. Ficino seems in this case to have chosen to end on a joyful note what must in fact have ended in disappointment. If Lorenzo had, in fact, hoped for some revelation, he had not received it. An experiment, however noble, had failed.

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15. G. Pico della Mirandola, *De hominis dignitate* . . . , ed. E. Garin (Florence: Vallecchi, 1942), pp. 108-110.

16. See *Theologia Platonica*, XIII, 2 (*Opera*, I, 295) and Kristeller, *Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, p. 216.

17. Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (Oxford and London: Phaidon Press, 1945), p. 131, Part III, 6, "The Propagators of Antiquity." The relationships between the *de hominis dignitate* and Ficino's works are discussed by Kristeller, *Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, pp. 407 ff.

VOLTAIRE'S CRITICISM OF PETRARCH

By Clifton Cherpach

If anyone remembers anything that Voltaire said about Petrarch it is probably this remark: "Je ne fais pas grand cas des vers de Pétrarque: c'est le génie le plus fécond du monde dans l'art de dire toujours la même chose. . . ."¹ Here we seem to find a microcosmic example of eighteenth-century taste as it has been generally characterized—witty and energetic, but superficial, antipoetic, and insensitive. That Petrarch was known to Voltaire at all seems to elicit a reaction compounded of surprise, satisfaction, and disappointment in studies of the influence of Petrarch in France. Carlo Pellegrini says, for example: "Nè lo stesso secolo decimottavo, che sembrarebbe a prima vista assai lontano dalla sensibilità petrarchesca . . . ignorò il nostro scrittore, se pensiamo che Voltaire mostrò di conoscerlo direttamente, traducendone anche dei passi, seppure in lui colpirono soprattutto la grazia e l'eleganza senza che riuscisse a penetrare nella profondità dell'anima del poeta."²

To assay the *justesse* of Prof. Pellegrini's observation, we must remind ourselves again that the "a prima vista" approach to the attitude towards poetry in eighteenth-century France has been overdone, and that poetry, far from being superficially regarded, was the object of intense interest among many of the *philosophes*, who put it on the dissecting tray and under the microscope along with the other subjects which seemed to require fresh examination and revaluation. With specific reference to Voltaire, it must be stated that he was not, as is implied, essentially oblivious, being a rationalistic *philosophe*, to the beauty and profundity of Petrarch's poetic soul. In fact, a chronological review of Voltaire's remarks on Petrarch suggests that he actively searched for aesthetic depth in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, the only one of Petrarch's works he discusses, and that he found it lacking.

In 1746, Voltaire was elected to the Academy on his third application, and made at his reception a speech calculated to drive from the minds of his colleagues the satirical pamphlets he had written on the occasions of his previous academic snubs. Since he replaced Bouhier, who owed his transient glory to his translations of the ancients, Voltaire sympathetically took as his theme an elucidation of the near impossibility of translating the ancients adequately into French. In a note on the published speech he demonstrates his interest in the problems of poetic creativity by showing how much more amenable to metrical arrangements Italian and Latin are than French, because of the phonological idiosyncrasies of French, its

1. *Œuvres*, ed. Moland-Beuchot (Paris, 1877-85), XLIII, 249.

2. "Il Petrarca nella cultura Francese," *Rivista di Letterature Moderne*, I, 80.

use of subject pronouns, and its monotonous accentuation. These and other peculiarities make up the genius of a language, he thinks, and this genius is determined in each language by the great poets. This is true of Homer for Greek, Terence for Latin, and "... c'est Pétrarque qui, après le Dante, donna à la langue italienne cette aménité et cette grâce qu'elle a toujours conservées. . ."³ This same linguistically normative function is again ascribed to Petrarch in the *Essai sur les mœurs*. Voltaire there discusses the filiation of the Provençal and the Italian poets in the Middle Ages, and remarks the stagnation of the Provençal language "... tandis que sous la plume de Pétrarque la langue italienne atteignit à cette force et à cette grâce qui, loin de dégénérer, se perfectionna encore" (XII, 58). He recognizes Dante as an illustrious predecessor of Petrarch with his "bizarre" poem, the bad taste of which was, in his opinion, overcome by the talent of the poet. He also gives some highlights of Petrarch's life and attempts an imitation, not a translation as an agonized Carducci maintained, of the poem beginning *Chiare, fresche e dolci acque*, hoping to give the reader some idea of the manner in which Petrarch wrote, claiming to see in it "... un grand nombre de ces traits semblables à ces beaux ouvrages des anciens, qui ont à la fois la force de l'antiquité et la fraîcheur du moderne" (XII, 59). In still another part of the *Essai* he praises as most beautiful of Petrarch's poetry the *canzone* addressed to Cola da Rienzi, quoting two of its verses. In Voltaire's estimation, then, Petrarch was the agent by which the evolving Italian morphology and syntax was crystallized in the form which realized most perfectly its poetic potentialities. A similar function was performed for prose, he says, by Boccaccio, and adds: "La langue perfectionnée par ces deux écrivains, ne reçut plus d'altération, tandis que tous les autres peuples de l'Europe, jusqu'aux Grecs mêmes, ont changé leur idiome" (XII, 60).

So far, we have seen Voltaire judging *ex cathedra* as a solid historian and respectable academician. In 1764, however, he speaks of Petrarch less conservatively and starts a polemic which, when analysed, helps to illuminate the attitude of Voltaire and some of his contemporaries towards Petrarch, and, perhaps, towards poetry in general.

When the Abbé de Sade published the first two volumes of the *Mémoires pour la vie de François Pétrarque* in 1764, Voltaire submitted an anonymous article to the *Gazette Littéraire de l'Europe* wherein he reveals opinions on Petrarch which contain but a shade of the admiration he had formerly expressed. He says: "Il est vrai que Pétrarque, au XIV^e siècle était le meilleur poète de l'Europe, et même le seul; mais il n'est pas moins vrai que de ses petits ouvrages, qui roulent presque tous sur l'amour, il n'y en a pas un qui approche des beautés de sentiment qu'on trouve répandues avec tant de profusion dans Racine et dans Quinault. . ." (XXV, 186). He appeals to Italian literati of good faith to demonstrate to themselves

3. *Œuvres*, XXIII, 210.

to what disadvantage Petrarch may be compared to Ariosto, and even to Zappi, the Arcadian poet. He attributes much of Petrarch's fame to mere temporal remoteness with the quip: "On se fait dans les siècles les plus polis une espèce de religion d'admirer ce qu'on admirait dans les siècles grossiers" (XXV, 189). He does admit a certain grace and purity in Petrarch's verses, but finds nothing there which supports comparison with Tibullus, Ovid, and the love odes of Sappho. He also derides the misguided pedantic zeal which leads Petrarch scholars to argue over the probable day of composition of a particular poem and to speculate irrelevantly on the identity of Laura.

Such comments, especially the last, could not go unrefuted, since the author of the *Mémoires* was trying to prove that Laura was the wife of one of his ancestors. In a letter to the Count d'Argental on the thirtieth of June, 1764, Voltaire says: "Je crois que la *Gazette littéraire* m'a brouillé avec l'abbé de Sade" (XLIII, 259). He was not mistaken, for the editor of the *Gazette*, Arnauld, had divulged the identity of the author of the unflattering article, and De Sade, outraged, was only too glad to have Fréron train his editorial guns on his old enemy who seemed to have put himself in a vulnerable position. In July, 1764, Fréron published a purported letter from a Florentine correspondent in refutation of the *Gazette* article. The indignant Italian, after praising the *Mémoires* and De Sade, finds the author of the *Gazette* article guilty of nationalistic bias, inability to distinguish between a *canzone* and a *chanson*, and ignorance of the requirements of a *sonetto di risposta*. He further accuses the "censeur" of supposing great enthusiasm in the partisans of Petrarch "... pour avoir des chimères à combattre. . .,"⁴ and, by specific example, of having mistranslated part of a sonnet. In a postscript, the Florentine remarks that the rumor attributing the authorship of the article under consideration to Voltaire is absurd, because the author of the article obviously did not understand Italian, and because Voltaire had roundly praised Petrarch in the *Essai sur les mœurs*. Fréron comments tersely: "Il serait difficile de concilier les contradictions de M. de Voltaire" (*A.L.*, p. 65).

How is it possible to explain Voltaire's volte-face? One is tempted, knowing that Voltaire was, at times, not above pettiness, to suppose that the change in tone resulted from a mere clash of personalities. There is evidence, however, that Voltaire's sour opinions were not conditioned by personal animosity towards the Abbé de Sade. In the letter to D'Argental shortly after the appearance of his article (XLIII, 251), Voltaire begs that the secret of his identity be kept for fear of alienating the Abbé. A week later, writing regretfully that the secret is out, he says: "Encore une fois, je n'aime pas Pétrarque, mais j'aime l'abbé de Sade" (XLIII, 259). Again, although it is possible that Voltaire is reacting against the lengthy accolade given the *Mémoires* by Fréron in March of 1764,⁵ there seems to

4. *Année littéraire*, 1764, V, 58.

5. *Année littéraire*, 1764, II, 217-45.

be a deeper basis for his revised opinion, which must be sought in a reconstruction of the attitude that prompted the *Gazette* article.

Voltaire says, therein: "Pétrarque, après tout, n'a peut-être d'autre mérite que d'avoir écrit élégamment des bagatelles, sans génie, dans un temps où ces amusements étaient très-estimés parce qu'ils étaient très-rares" (XXV, 189). If we recall Voltaire's explicit recognition elsewhere of Petrarch's importance in the history of the Italian language and literature, his greatest admiration for the political poem to Cola da Rienzi, and the fact that his direct knowledge of Petrarch's works was probably limited to the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, it seems clear that Voltaire, in his switch from praise to attack, is reacting, in general, against what he must have considered the content of Petrarch's verse, not its form, the *concetti*, not the music, the *signatum*, not the *signans*. Further evidence for this conclusion may be adduced from the way in which he criticizes sonnet CLXXVI. He translates an excerpt in this way: "L'an mil trois cent vingt-sept, tout juste le sixième d'avril, au matin, j'entraî dans le labyrinthe de l'amour, et je ne vois pas comment j'en sortirai." He adds: "On ne peut pas accuser ce sonnet d'être trop brillant; il n'y a pas là de beautés recherchées" (XXV, 187). The music gone, these words become to Voltaire more appropriate to the meticulously kept journal of a traveler than to a sonnet. It need not be assumed, of course, that Voltaire's general criterion of good poetry was "brilliance" of thought as revealable in prose paraphrases. It seems probable that, in this case, he was merely irritated by Petrarch's manifold emphasis on the time-space details of what the specialists usually term his "enamorment." It is also interesting to note that in Voltaire's imitation of the *canzone* beginning *Chiare, fresche e dolci acque*, he makes little attempt to follow the thread of Petrarch's meaning, but seems to be trying, albeit unsuccessfully, to give an impression of the charm of its sound and rhythm. Only the first stanza of this *canzone* is imitated, probably because of its gentle imagery into which enter no ship theme, no arrows, no conversion of men by looking at the lady, no sitting of Love in the eyes, no dialogue between Love and the Heart or Reason, no transfer of "spirits" between the lover and the beloved, and most important, perhaps, for Voltaire's this-worldly eighteenth century, no symbol in the lady's aspect of bright immortality or irrevocable damnation.

If we accept the theory that Voltaire's attack on Petrarch was the result of his distaste for what he regarded as cumbersome and artificial amorous psychology resulting in thematic monotony and superficial conceits, it is interesting to note that this line of criticism was common enough among his contemporaries to have been shared even by his opponents in the clash.

In his introductory letter to the *Mémoires*, De Sade, speaking of the inclusion in his work of many of Petrarch's verses, says: "Ces poésies

roulent presque toujours sur son amour pour Laure⁶ dont elles nous apprennent des détails frivoles, qui ne peuvent être intéressants, dira-t-on, que pour les femmes, et un certain nombre d'hommes effeminés, qui passent leur vie avec elles." He adds that Petrarch himself was ashamed of these little poems in later life, and regretted their wide circulation, commenting: "Ce sont cependant ces *niaiseries* [he quotes the word from Petrarch] qui l'ont élevé à ce degré de gloire dont il jouit, et qui lui ont procuré l'immortalité" (*Mémoires*, xcvi). The analysis by De Sade of Petrarch's treatment of love reveals that its originality lies in its purity, its delicacy, and its *honnêteté*. It is in this *honnêteté* that the subject matter of Petrarch is superior to that of the love poetry of the ancients, and recalls the Old French chivalric novels. He agrees, however, that this "Platonic" kind of love is little to be appreciated in the eighteenth century, and goes on to say: "Il est difficile que l'expression la plus heureuse de sentiments que nous n'avons pas éprouvés nous fasse un certain plaisir. L'amour de Pétrarque a encore un grave défaut pour nous; c'est qu'il est monotone . . . toujours le même objet; presque toujours le même ton. . ." (*Mémoires*, cxii). He seems to sum up the situation by saying: "Vous m'avouerez, messieurs, qu'il est difficile de lire avec plaisir 4000 vers dont cet amour, unique peut-être dans son espèce, est le sujet. . ." (*Mémoires*, cxiii). There is evidently little disagreement between this opinion and Voltaire's characterization of Petrarch as ". . . le génie le plus fécond dans l'art de dire toujours la même chose. . ."⁷

6. Cf. Voltaire: ". . . ses petits ouvrages roulent presque toujours sur l'amour . . ." (XXV, 186).

7. *Mémoires pour la vie de François Pétrarque* (Amsterdam, 1764), I, xcvi-xcvi.

8. Interest in Petrarch's complex "amorology" seems to have been general in the eighteenth century. For example, readers of the *Pour et Contre* learned in 1737 that this affair, ". . . qui ne ressembloit point aux passions ordinaires . . ." was the subject of one of the scenes in Des Rosiers' *Amours des grands hommes*. The principals end this scene, which takes place in Rome after the poet's coronation, by saying together: "Et que notre délicatesse / Fasse à jamais respecter nos soupirs" (Vol. XII, p. 75). Other commentators were, like De Sade, not sure that this "délicatesse" was suited to eighteenth-century taste. The *Journal étranger* of August, 1755, comments on Gravina's close analysis of Petrarchan love: "Quiconque n'a pas fait expérience de cet amour, quelque génie, quelque culture, quelque savoir qu'on lui suppose, ne peut sentir la vivacité ni la vérité des peintures de Pétrarque. Les physiiciens, dont notre siècle abonde . . . traitent l'amour épuré comme une chimère inventée par Socrate et Platon, ou comme un voile honnête pour couvrir de sales desirs" (pp. 236-37). This, of course, makes one think of Diderot's cynical remark: "Il y a un peu de testicule au fond de nos sentiments les plus sublimes et de notre tendresse la plus épurée" (*Correspondance inédite*, ed. A. Babelon [Paris, 1931], I, 266). Again, in the same volume of the *Gazette Littéraire* which contains Voltaire's comments, the editor, reviewing a recent anthology of Italian poetry edited in Germany, describes Petrarch's love as more similar to ". . . un cours de Métaphysique qu'à l'expression naturelle d'un sentiment vif et profond . . ." (p. 69). His poetry seems to have been composed ". . . pour exercer la pénétration et la subtilité des Commentateurs . . ." (p. 72), and contains a collection of ". . . songes, des visions, des défaillances d'amour, un penser qui questionne, un penser qui répond, des pensers qui raisonnent ensemble; ses Sonnets mêmes renferment souvent des idées ou fausses ou puériles" (p. 72).

The Petrarchan conceits are also the object of De Sade's criticism. He remarks that he has taken the liberty of suppressing certain verses where Petrarch "... n'est pas supportable, de l'aveu même des meilleurs critiques Italiens;" but adds that these verses are rare "... et qu'on ne trouve dans Pétrarque qu'un très-petit nombre de ces *concelli* que nous reprochons aux Italiens" (*Mémoires*, cix). This complaint concerning conceits recalls an aesthetic pronouncement made by that other staunch defender of Petrarch, Fréron, who says about Petrarch's playing with Laura's name: "Ses vers en sont remplis; il tourne de cent façons cette idée recherchée, et qui respire le mauvais goût. . . ."⁹

In discussing the difficulty of translating Petrarch's verse, De Sade agrees with Voltaire on the nonpoetic aspects of the French language, quotes him on the necessity of translating verse in verse, and reveals the opinion that Petrarch's greatest charm may be said to lie in an intangible quality, a magical linguistic amalgam resulting from a subtle blending of word-music and color that defies exact translation. The following passage solidifies this idea: "On a soutenu, il y a longtemps, même en Italie, que le principal mérite des Poésies de Pétrarque consiste dans le choix des termes, la richesse des rimes, et l'harmonie des vers; trois choses qu'il est impossible de faire passer d'une langue à l'autre" (*Mémoires*, cxi).¹⁰ Here is complete agreement with Voltaire's critical attitude as it has been postulated, and we may conclude that, in this quarrel, the opposing factions entertain substantially the same idea and are merely bickering about details and nuances. Indeed, it would have been embarrassing to Fréron, who had hinted that Voltaire's failure to appreciate Petrarch was due to the incompetency of his Italian, to point out the fact that De Sade apparently thought enough of Voltaire's ability as a translator to imitate the latter's very free imitation of the first part of the *canzone* beginning *Chiare, fresche e dolci acque*.¹¹

If we admit, then, that the admiration of both Voltaire and De Sade for Petrarch is based upon cognizance of his importance in the development of world literature (De Sade quotes Voltaire as saying that the Tuscan writers began the Renaissance), and especially upon the charm of his music rather than the "content" of his poems, it may be argued that these opinions have little interest outside the frame of reference of pure literary history, or, indeed, that this proof of unanimity of opinion might be used to support Prof. Pellegrini's remark concerning the insensibility of the age. To show, however, that the objections of Voltaire, De

9. *Année littéraire*, 1764, II, 237.

10. This same idea is clearly expressed by the editor of the *Gazette Littéraire* in the review mentioned above: "D'où l'on pourroit conclure que la plus grande partie des beautés de Pétrarque tient uniquement aux charmes du style; que ce Poète trouva le plus haut point d'harmonie où sa Langue pût parvenir; et qu'en général les Italiens, tels qu'autrefois le peuple d'Athènes, sont si sensibles à l'harmonie qu'on a rempli en quelque sorte tous leurs besoins quand on a enchanté leurs oreilles" (p. 75).

11. Cf. Voltaire, XII, 59; and De Sade, *Mémoires*, II, III, 208.

Sade, and Fréron to Petrarch are more than the product of a rationalistic and soulless era, it is only necessary to cite in passing some inadvertent support of these objections by more modern and exceedingly more enthusiastic critics who reject most vehemently the view that sound and sense in poetry can be considered separately. There is, for example, a significant contradiction implicit in the statement of De Sanctis, the primary oracle of the idea that "... la parola è nel vero poeta sentimento lirico e fantasia in atto..." in which he characterizes Dante as the greatest poet of the Middle Ages because of his exquisite lyrical sense and spontaneity, and Petrarch as the greatest artist of his time because of his mastery of rhetoric. Again, a contemporary supporter of De Sanctis, Carlo Calcaterra, in his article "Il Petrarca e il Petrarchismo,"¹² remarks that Leopardi had once accepted Chesterfield's judgment of Petrarch as "sing-song" and adds, in a manner rather damning to his theory of the subtlety of the poet's lyric sense of love and flexibility of poetic form: "Questo giudizio coglie nel segno, indicando l'insistenza del Petrarca sul medesimo argomento e su consimili modi d'arte" (p. 203).

Thus, in the sense that, even among the most partial critics today the *rapport* between the *alma poesis* and the *ars dictandi* has not been satisfactorily determined, Voltaire's qualified admiration for Petrarch, centering on his historical importance and the musical charm of his verse, rather than on the "profondità dell'anima del poeta," is not a mere historical curiosity to be filed away with quaint eighteenth-century concepts. Rather, this admiration, thus qualified, whether we share it or not, represents a persistent and living point of view.

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12. In *Questioni e correnti di storia letteraria*, ed. A. Momigliano (Milan, 1949), 167-213.

NOTES ON VOLTAIRE'S *ZULIME*

By Francis J. Crowley

ZULIME, begun in 1738 and played in June 1740, was a failure. Was this due to its being an "élégie amoureuse en dialogues" or to its author's inability to extricate himself from its essentially novelistic plot? In any case, Voltaire should have been forewarned by the experience of Racine with *Bajazet*, whose evident similarities to his work he frequently admitted. He soon recognized that he was in deep water, and try as he might to improve his play, the results were far from satisfying. Gradually he was forced to admit to himself that his efforts remained unavailing, despite the change of name (now *Médime*, now *Fanime*) and the changes in *dé-nouement*.¹

The data we have at hand regarding the sources of the play are of some interest. The author in a letter dated January 9, 1739, says: "Je n'ai rien pris. J'ai trouvé ma situation dans mon sujet, j'ai été inspiré, je ne suis point plagiaire."² Its melodramatic plot he sketches in these words:

C'est un père trahi par une fille dont il est l'idole et qui en est idolâtrée. C'est une fille malheureuse, sacrifiant tout à un amour effréné, sauvant la vie à son amant, quittant tout pour lui, et abandonnée par lui, c'est un combat perpétuel de passions; c'est un père massacré par l'amant,³ qui abandonne cette fille infortunée; ce sont des crimes presque involontaires, et des passions insurmontables. Figurez-vous un peu de Chimène, de Roxane, et d'Ariane.⁴

This theatrical brew, this *pot pourri*, came from Moorish history, if we are to believe the preface of the play when it was published in 1761.⁵ So much for Voltaire's claims of originality. Lion in his authoritative *Les Tragédies et les Théories dramatiques de Voltaire* (1895, p. 112 ff.), Jean Cazenave in his brief article, "Une Tragédie mauresque de Voltaire, *Zulime*" (*RLC*, April, 1925), H. Fenger in his long article, "Voltaire et le théâtre anglais (*Orbis litterarum*, VII (1949) pp. 161-287), and most recently H. C. Lancaster in his exhaustive study of *French Tragedy in the Time of Louis XV and Voltaire* (I, 198 ff.), in dealing with the play all suggest possible sources. Let us examine these data in order. Lion, following the author's statements, grants "une certaine conformité avec le

1. Voltaire wrote in Dec., 1756 (Moland XXXIX, 143): "Il y aura quelques scènes nouvelles; et comme les deux derniers actes sont absolument différents de ceux qui furent joués, la pièce sera en effet toute neuve." The criticism of the last 2 acts had been made in the "Lettre singulière du S^r de Lépine, dit Floribel, acteur breton, à la D^{lle} de xxx, Directrice de la Comédie à Quimper," *Mercur de France*, June, 1740, pp. 1203-1208.

2. Moland XXV, 103. La Harpe in his *Lycée* says, "La pièce, toute d'invention. . ."

3. This was later dropped from the plot.

4. Moland XXXV, 94-95.

5. "L'aventure de *Zulime*, tirée de l'histoire des Maures." (Moland IV, 7.)

Bajazet de Racine," and adds: "L'action et les principaux noms . . . sont empruntés à l'histoire des Maures." One could wish he had been a whit more explicit. Cazenave finds additional data in Voltaire's reading in 1738, and claims that the idea for the *locale* of the plot came from *Zaïde* (by Mme de La Fayette), which has a character named Ramire and one named Zuléma; that the plot of *Zaïde* involves the love of a Mohammedan for a Spanish nobleman. He further suggests that Voltaire used Luis de Marmol Caravajal's *Description de l'Afrique* in the Perrot d'Ablancourt translation. Fenger voices loud contempt for the play and adds: "La scène de l'action est l'Afrique et les personnages sont des Espagnols et des Maures, ce mélange exotique qu'il a peut-être emprunté à *The Conquest of Granada*, *Don Sebastian* et *The Spanish Fryar* de Dryden ou à *The Mourning Bride* de Congreve." No evidence to support this vague and extremely unconvincing statement is offered. These elements of the plot are too frequent in French works to need any English source. Lancaster seems not to have known the article by Cazenave, and Fenger's article came, no doubt, too late to affect his study, but he differs from Lion in suggesting that "the sources are dramatic rather than historical," apparently here taking Voltaire at his word.

It seems to me that an important source of the play has hitherto been overlooked. I refer to a work by Eustache Le Noble called *Zulima ou l'amour pur*, published in Paris in 1695. Although it escaped the notice of Miss Marjorie Chaplyn in her Paris dissertation, *Le Roman mauresque en France de Zayde au dernier Abencérage* (Nemours, 1928), it deserved her attention. In both Le Noble and Voltaire the title is derived from the name of the protagonist, Zulima or Zulime. She is the daughter of the ruler of the country and sole heir to the throne. The scene in both is laid in Africa—with Le Noble it is Egypt, and in Voltaire, "la province de Trémizène, sur le bord de la mer d'Afrique." However, the scene shifted from the neighborhood of what is now Oran when the play was called *Fanime* in 1760, for the author says in a letter: "la scène est à Saïd . . . Nous eûmes pour spectateur un Arabe qui est de Saïd même."⁶ The time in *Zulima* is "le règne de Noradin" after the battle of Joppa.⁷ With Voltaire, as is generally the case, the time is only vaguely identifiable in that Valencia is still in Arab hands.⁸ In both works the royal princess is at some difficulty and pains to leave her native land and flee with an ex-slave who has captured her heart and who is deeply indebted to her for past favors. In both, the hero, of royal birth, has suffered captivity due to the fortunes of war. In both, the princess, by ardent advances, leaves the hero in no doubt as to her plans for his future. In both, she is kept in ignorance of

6. Moland XLI, 4.

7. It will be recalled that *Zaïre* concerns this general period. There are other similarities, such as the role of mistaken identity in the stabbing scenes.

8. La Harpe in his *Lycée* says, "On peut supposer que l'action se passe au dixième siècle puisque Ramire prétend avoir des droits à la principauté des Maures. . . ."

the fact that he is the husband of a fellow captive, his countrywoman. His delay—more or less motivated by gallantry—in revealing his “guilty” secret gives rise—in both—to the same kind of evasive conduct on his part, and, on hers, the same anguished uncertainty. *Le Noble* made him a German, whereas Voltaire gave him Spanish nationality. In both works the heroine makes the hero's plight worse by her glad consent to change her religion for his. In both, a bargain is made with the hero, whereby his freedom is offered him in return for his aid in a solution of Zulima's fate favorable to the wishes of her father. The father is outwitted both in *Le Noble* and in Voltaire, but in the latter's work the strong-willed daughter brings tragedy on herself whereas, in *Le Noble's* story, she stages a melodramatic escape by sea with her sweetheart and his wife and helps them to set up a *ménage à trois* until her rival obligingly makes marriage possible by her demise.

Fenger's words that *Zulime* “fut représentée en juin 1740 et lui valut un four, de sorte que l'auteur fort honteux . . . jura de ne plus jamais la faire réimprimer” certainly imply that the work was printed then, but this was not the case. The first edition, according to Bengesco and Lancaster, was not published until 1761. However, the first authorized edition came out only in 1763.

The play came to the boards again in 1762 and Voltaire's cup of bitterness and disappointment must have been close to running over if he read the sarcastic *critique* of the play, *Lettre de M. D. R. à M. de S. R. sur la Zulime de Voltaire et sur l'Ecueil du Sage du mesme auteur*, which appeared in the same year. It claims that a *quiproquo* is always the basis of Voltaire's plays. The motivation in *Zulime* is deficient in many places. The critic condemns the roles of Idamore and Atide. The play sins against verisimilitude, and Act IV contains an example of two rivals “dont la dispute se souffrirait à peine dans le haut Comique.” After finding fault with the author's images, he goes on to reprove Mlle Clairon for her “pronunciation ridicule” of final consonants:

On ne dit plus ‘trépas’, ‘bras’; mais on prononce comme si l'on écrivait ‘trépase’, ‘brase’; on ne dit plus, ‘Dieux’, ‘yeux’; ‘assez’, ‘effacez’; ‘tourmentait’; mais ‘Dieuse’, ‘yeuse’, ‘assese’, ‘effacese’, ‘tourmentête’. On prononce les finales de ‘cruels’, ‘autels’, ‘éternels’ comme on prononce la finale de ‘Paracelse.’

Soon after the death of Voltaire a tempest in a teapot broke out over the merits of *Zulime*. It raged in June and July 1778 in the *Mercure* and in the *Journal de Paris*. La Harpe was merciless in condemning the play with such comments as:

Les défauts de *Bajazet* ont engagé Voltaire vers 1740, à traiter dans *Zulime* un sujet à peu près semblable; jamais tentative n'a été plus malheureuse . . . la pièce manque à la fois par l'intrigue qui est froide et embrouillée et par le style qui n'est pas celui de Voltaire.

Villev... (was it Condorcet as La Harpe believed?) was provoked to anger by what he suggested was an unfair attack on a dead man. He chided both Panckouke (to whom his letter in the *Journal de Paris* under date of July 10, 1778 is addressed) and La Harpe ("qui s'honorait d'être son disciple") for allowing the article to be printed in the *Mercure*. The next day La Harpe gave vent to his indignation. He objected in the *Journal de Paris* to the studied malice of Villev... but stated he would have to await a calmer mood before replying to this unwarranted and unjustified attack on his motives. The issue of July 14 carried a letter in reply by Villev... which is a masterpiece of fencing and provocation, yielding no positions and stating firmly that, so far as Villev... was concerned, he would make no further reply, whatever action La Harpe might take. He stated that his purpose of vindicating ("mon ami, mon maître") Voltaire had been achieved and he refused in ironical terms to believe that La Harpe, indebted to Voltaire as he was, could be the writer of the original criticism. He kept his word and La Harpe's later reply got no response. La Harpe did not change his attitude on *Zulime*, and in his *Lycée* we find the following strictures on the play: "Sujet, intrigue, caractères, conduite, versification, tout est également faible ou vicieux." Certainly it is difficult not to agree with him in large measure. Racine did not need to look to his laurels because of *Zulime*.

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WYNDHAM LEWIS AND BERGSON

By Geoffrey Wagner

"My literary career," Wyndham Lewis has written in his latest autobiography, "began in France."¹ There will be those who think that it ended there, in French anti-romanticism of the first decade of this century. Actually, by this statement, Lewis meant that it was out of his travels in Brittany that his first stories, published by Ford Madox Ford, grew; but he has also told us that he attended Bergson's lectures at the Collège de France in the first years of this century, and no closer clue could have been given to this satirist's development. For unlike his neo-classical colleagues Irving Babbitt and T. E. Hulme, Lewis does not further admit the French source of his ideas.

In *The Masters of Modern French Criticism*,² Babbitt mentions with respect a work he had earlier told us caught his eye in a Paris bookshop,³ Pierre Lasserre's *Le Romantisme français*, that famous (or infamous) doctoral dissertation begun in 1903, completed in 1906, and published in 1907, quickly running into a second edition in 1908. Both Lasserre and "Agathon" (Henri Massis and Alfred de Tarde) are singled out for praise by Babbitt; both, or rather all three, were *ligueurs* of the *Action française* by this time, Lasserre having written his *Charles Maurras et la renaissance classique* in 1902. It was this neo-classical revival consisting chiefly, as distinguished by MM. Girard and Moncel, of Maurras, Paul Bourget, Massis, M. le baron Ernest Seillière (whose name re-echoes throughout Babbitt's *Democracy and Leadership* and *On Being Creative*), Julien Benda, Lasserre, and Jacques Maritain,⁴ with which Lewis came into contact, rather than the residue of the *école romane* of Moréas, whose manifesto had appeared in the *Figaro* for September 14, 1891, and who attracted more Lewis's "miglior fabbro" Ezra Pound, as witness Pound's *Instigations*. In fact, Lewis features the Café des Lilas, where Maurras originally presided over his neo-classical gatherings, as the Café Berne of his first novel, *Tarr*. Moreover, this early satire set in German- or Romance-infested Paris derives a great deal, particularly in its view of woman, from Benda's novel *L'Ordination*, first serialized in Péguy's *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* which also published (2^e cahier de la 15^e série) Benda's *Sur le Succès du Bergsonisme*. For if, as we know to be the case, there were internecine

1. Wyndham Lewis, *Rude Assignment*, London, Hutchinson, 1950, p. 113.

2. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1912, p. 381.

3. Irving Babbitt, *The New Laokoon*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1910, pp. xii-xiii.

4. Henri Girard et Henri Moncel, *Pour et Contre le Romantisme. Bibliographie des travaux publiés de 1914 à 1926*, Paris, *Etudes françaises*, onzième cahier, 1^{er} février, 1927, pp. 19-21.

distinctions early evident in these French neo-classicists, they were united on one point, detestation of Henri Bergson. Or, in other words, while the cohorts of Maurras may have disagreed with the desperadoes of Wyndham Lewis as to what constituted classicism, they shared an identical hatred of what they took to be the nineteenth-century romantic ideal. In this sense it is perhaps safer to call the movement as a European phenomenon—and, confusion worse confounded, it had its German representatives!—anti-romantic rather than neo-classical.⁵

Or should we say anti-Bergsonist? If Lasserre's dissertation was not quite "the first 'text-book' of anti-romantic criticism" as P. Mansell Jones calls it,⁶ it is true that it set the tone, by characterizing Rousseau as, variously, a charlatan, a debauchee, and a maniac. Benda began to attack Bergson in earnest about 1912, while Maritain published his *L'Évolutionisme de M. Bergson* in 1911, his *Philosophie de M. Bergson* in 1913. In 1913 there also appeared Henri Clouard's *Les Disciplines. Nécessité littéraire et sociale d'une renaissance classique*, a work which cited Bergson

5. It would be wrong to imagine Lewis's classicism (*tel quel*) as exclusively Hellenic. Because of certain graphic interests, Lewis, in common with Pound and Hulme, called Oriental man classical. Maurras, for whom to be Roman was to be human and who early apostrophized Minerva, saw his classicism as Hellenic, Roman, and Catholic (e.g. Charles Maurras, *Romantisme et révolution*, Paris, Nouvelle Librairie Nationale, 1922, p. 270; as most scholars in this field will remember, this volume collects a number of characteristically Maurrassian texts). In *Mise au point*, Lasserre tries to rally Frenchmen to their Hellenic heritage ("Soyons nous-mêmes: occidentaux, latins, grecs, français!"). Even Péguy equates the classical Greek with the French genius in one place, while Scillière, who traces romanticism to early Japan in *Les Origines romanesques de la morale et de la politique romantique*, tries to discredit unclassical Plato in *Le Romantisme* by finding him contaminated by the Jewish Orient (Ernest Scillière, *Le Romantisme*, Paris, Stock, 1925, p. 20). Jules Lemaître reiterates this typically anti-romantic suspicion of Plato, finding Socrates opposed to Aryan Hellenism and infected by the Semitic virus. All this can be paralleled in Germany in Paul Ernst, Wilhelm von Scholz, and Samuel Lublinski. But the more one studies the phenomenon the more persuaded one becomes of Ramon Fernandez's temperate analysis published in *La Nouvelle Revue française* for January 1, 1929, the centenary of French romanticism. Fernandez, like, in practice, the Joyce of *Finnegans Wake*, finds the classical-romantic antithesis factitious today. In this context, it must be enough to point out, in support of Fernandez in France and of Sir Herbert Grierson in England, that the French anti-romantic fear of "asiatisme"—with which Massis found Gide and Proust afflicted—is never translated in Pound, Lewis, or Hulme, simply because these men were devoted to Oriental art. Massis's *Défense de l'Occident* finds the Orient to be a principal enemy of classicism, but Lewis's *Time and Western Man*, published within a year of Massis's book, takes a reverse view. Lewis actually defends the ancient Orient against Spengler, claiming that Spengler (whom Massis despises almost as much as Keyserling) distorts Oriental civilization, "making Buddha swallow his words, and Confucius learn to play the ukelele" (Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1927, p. 238). Then, on the other hand, Lewis, who calls Eliot, Hulme, and Pound romantic at various points in his career, approaches Maurras politically, although of course explicitly reviling him. Thus Maurras found his "politique classique" in Franco's Spain, and Lewis discerned "an imminent classical serenity" in Hitler's early politics (Wyndham Lewis, *Hitler*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1931, p. 184).

6. P. Mansell Jones, *Tradition and Barbarism*, London, Faber, 1930, p. 33.

as anti-intellectual. In the next year Lewis accorded Bergson a "blast" in *Blast No. 1*. All the same, the attack on Bergson remains relatively guarded in such works as these. Bergson is progressively anathematized in France. In 1908 Seillière is still respectfully hostile in *Le Mal romantique*. "Agathon" is temperate even in 1911, writing such tangential criticisms as—"nous défendons la culture de l'intelligence contre la culture de la mémoire." But by 1913, in *Les Jeunes Gens d'aujourd'hui*, "Agathon" is far more severe. This may have been due to the fact that Bergson was to some extent himself an anti-Sorbonnist, and in this way a rebel against the alleged romantic orthodoxy, for his candidature to the Sorbonne was refused in 1894 and again in 1898. Lewis, then, began his anti-Bergsonism in 1914, when the controversy was growing heated, when anti-romanticists like Lasserre were not above ridiculing Bergson for his race and when, indeed, the philosopher of flux was being threatened with the guillotine in the daily press. This was T. E. Hulme's mood, too, for although Hulme paradoxically admired Bergson, he writes with obvious relish of attending a lecture on Racine in Paris which was heckled by irascible young students;⁸ Montgomery Belgium corroborates that these hecklers were, indeed, *camelots du roi*.⁹ From the moment he engages in the controversy Lewis makes Bergsonism carry almost everything he dislikes in modern life.

Bergson, Lewis claims in his first extended critical work, opposes "every form of intelligent life."¹⁰ In his next critical volume, *Time and Western Man*, there is even less attempt to discuss Bergson's philosophy, even more diatribes whenever the French thinker's name appears on the page, which is fairly often. For Lewis, of course, Bergson stands on the side of intuition and sensation as against perception. Interestingly it was Lewis's friend, and admitted mentor, T. E. Hulme, who brought *Introduction à la métaphysique* to England, that stimulating essay which lays so much emphasis on intuition as the key to reality in the field of metaphysics: "Il suit de là qu'un absolu ne saurait être donné que dans une intuition, tandis que tout le reste relève de l'analyse."¹¹ In actual fact, it is Lewis himself who shows such little desire to analyse responsibly; from *The Art of Being Ruled* on, he seems simply concerned to denigrate Bergsonism as a philosophy of the "mental," in the sense of the "interior," the "mechanical," the "sensational," the world of time rather than of something he calls

7. "Agathon," *L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1911, p. 18.

8. T. E. Hulme, *Speculations*, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1936, pp. 114-115.

9. Montgomery Belgium, "Irving Babbitt and the Continent," *T. S. Eliot: A Symposium*, London, Editions Poetry London, 1948, p. 55.

10. Wyndham Lewis, *The Art of Being Ruled*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1926, p. 403.

11. Henri Bergson, "Introduction à la métaphysique," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, onzième année, 1903, p. 3.

space.¹² And in his literary criticism Lewis uses this attack as a weapon with which to assault writers like Gertrude Stein and James Joyce ("Bergson's doctrine of Time is the creative source of the time-philosophy" is a typical *aperçu* in this connection). Bergson, Lewis alleges in *The Art of Being Ruled*, besides being the champion of feminine intuition and anarchic sensation, is also the spokesman for the way of life of the typical American business man. Then, elsewhere, we read with some understandable surprise that Bergson is also responsible for "red" revolution."¹³

What Lewis really does is to make academically intolerable, and morbidly repetitive, Benda's *Le Bergsonisme*, first published in 1912. Both Lewis and Benda start from a fundamental quarrel with Bergson's thesis, principally expressed in *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, that the intellect distorts reality if it unfolds everything in space. For Benda, "*L'Évolution créatrice n'est qu'une longue noyade.*"¹⁴ It is evident that Benda's *Le Bergsonisme*, one of the best examples of this anti-romantic attack in my opinion, was picked up by critics in England and America; and anti-Bergsonism in these two countries varies from the gentlemanly, dull periods of Irving Babbitt¹⁵ to Pound's use of an obscene word for the philosophy in *The Townsman*.¹⁶ It does not seem, in retrospect, that the English-speaking anti-romanticist lends very much to the debate that had taken place earlier in France. Indeed, the English tended to translate, rather than to create, anti-romantic criticism; F. S. Flint, who had helped Hulme to translate Bergson according to Richard Aldington,¹⁷ translated Henri Massis's *Défense de l'Occident* for Faber and Gwyer in 1927, and Aldington followed this up with his translation of Benda's *La Trahison des clercs*. Perhaps an exception should be made for T. S. Eliot, who guided, and in some cases defended, Benda, Maritain, and Maurras in translation through the pages of *The Criterion* in the twenties and who adds, more recently, a novel élite theory to the general position. But on the whole it is restless intuition, excitable sensation, making events and objects transitory and subjective, threatening everywhere the static world of calm common-sense, the preserve of the intellect, this is the stereotype of Bergsonism these critics present. At least Benda and Ramon Fernandez present it respectably.

"L'objet artistique résiste à toute tentative d'assimilation aux fan-

12. Lewis, *Art of Being Ruled*, p. 403 ff.; *Time and Western Man*, p. 435; Wyndham Lewis, *Paleface*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1929, p. 160.

13. Wyndham Lewis, *One-Way Song*, London, Faber and Faber, 1933, p. 122.

14. Julien Benda, *Le Bergsonisme ou une philosophie de la mobilité*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1913, p. 23.

15. Irving Babbitt, *Rousseau and Romanticism*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1919, p. 281; Irving Babbitt, *Democracy and Leadership*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1924, p. 169.

16. Ezra Pound, "This Hulme Business," *The Townsman*, vol. II, no. 5, January, 1939, p. 15.

17. Richard Aldington, *Life for Life's Sake*, New York, Viking, 1941, p. 169.

taies du sujet,"¹⁸ writes Fernandez, and this is what Benda had termed, in "the excellent *Belphégor*" as Lewis calls it, "l'esthétique du sujet" or "ipséisme."¹⁹ This is precisely what Lewis dislikes in Bergsonism, the so-called abandonment of perception for subjective sensation (although, of course, it is in the interests of perception that Bergson takes up his pen in the first place). Arghol states this for Lewis in his early play, *The Enemy of the Stars*.²⁰ In *Time and Western Man* Lewis himself says:

Perception, in short, smacks of contemplation, it suggests leisure: only sensation guarantees action, and a full consciousness that "time is money," and that leisure is made for masters, not for men, or for the old bad world of Authority, not the good new world of alleged mass-rule.

Bergson, Benda writes in *Le Bergsonisme*, by denying knowledge of "mobilité" to the intellect, is poeticizing intuition, and desirating action before consciousness. Both Lewis and Benda call Bergsonism dogmatic.²¹ For Benda, Bergsonism is a pretentious philosophy which fails to realize that a view of life cannot be life, which neglects space, and postulates "connaissance vive" rather than "connaissance de l'abstrait."²² In *Time and Western Man* Lewis writes that Bergson has a "fanatical objection to the static." This parallelism, this common view of Bergsonism as an anti-intellectual creed typical of the contemporary democracy, could be prolonged *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam*. Suffice it to say here that Lewis puts himself forward as one of the most virulently bitter anti-Bergsonists imaginable. The core of nearly all his criticism can be found, however, earlier, in some form or another, in the cooler Benda; and it is adding something of philosophical injury to insult when we come on to find Lewis considerably indebted in his theory of creative satire to Bergson's *Le Rire*, a work which does not appear to occupy the French anti-romanticists very much.

Now Lewis does not commit himself to a coherent theory of satire until he has written a good deal of it, notably *Tarr* and *The Apes of God*. But the group of stories he later assembled under the title *The Wild Body*, his earliest work and that set in Brittany, began appearing before the first

18. Ramon Fernandez, *Messages*, Paris, Gallimard, 1926, p. 27.

19. Julien Benda, *Belphégor. Essai sur l'esthétique de la présente société française*, Paris, Emile-Paul Frères, 1919, p. 104. This was the sixth edition, the first being in 1918, but an "Avertissement" maintaining that the whole was mainly written before 1914.

20. Wyndham Lewis, *The Enemy of the Stars*, London, Desmond Harmsworth, 1932, p. 31. Reprinted, with revisions, from *Blast* No. 1 of 1914.

21. Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, p. 409; Benda, *Le Bergsonisme*, p. 29.

22. Benda, *Le Bergsonisme*, p. 65. Benda argues thus: "s'il est incontestable que 'nous qui regardons la ligne décrite par le mobile, nous ne sommes pas cette ligne,' réciproquement vous qui êtes devenus cette ligne, vous ne pouvez plus la voir; s'il est incontestable que notre raison reste nécessairement à l'extérieur des choses, non moins nécessairement votre 'installation à l'intérieur des choses' a rompu tout commerce avec la raison." (Benda, *Le Bergsonisme*, pp. 101-102; however, in fairness to Bergson, v. Henri Bergson, *L'Evolution créatrice*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1907, p. 260.)

world war in *The English Review* and in Douglas Goldring's *The Tramp*, and these stories contain implicitly a satiric technique from which Lewis has not deviated. This is not the place to adduce the distinction Lewis draws between humor and satire. Both issues of *Blast*, and Book IV of *The Mysterious Mr. Bull*, distinguish between humor, which is a dope or evasion of reality and therefore, for Lewis, romantic, and satire, which does something to you, is realistic and classical. Humor, for Tarr, paralyzes the sense for reality;²³ against this Lewis himself twice asserts in *Rude Assignment*, "wherever there is objective truth there is satire."

The function of satire for Lewis is to reveal reality, to depict ourselves as we are, not as we ought to be (although, of course, the creative act involved in this revelation is by its nature ideal). There are different kinds of satire. In classical satire, according to Lewis, the abstract or quintessence of a vice was pilloried; the Jonsonian "humour," which derived from Hellenic and Roman models, caricatured an impersonal vice, flayed a human flaw common to all. The "humour" was not, as with a newspaper cartoon today, attached to a definite individual in our midst. The contemporary satirist, Lewis believes, should engage with reality on both abstract and concrete levels; only in this way can the satirist recognizably expose contemporary vice and show up his age, in the manner of Flaubert. *The Ages of God*, a *roman à clef* if ever there was one, exemplifies these strictures. To this end, to reveal and by this revelation to destroy folly, contemporary satire must be disinterested and cruel. Indeed, because of the magnitude of contemporary folly, satire must be more painful than ever before, in order to succeed: "Perfect laughter, if there could be such a thing, would be inhuman."²⁴ Satire, he reiterates, will be only degraded if it compromises with morality, because moral judgments are in flux and because today ethics are usually tied to theology and are all the more to be eschewed. Satire, then, by magnifying vice "in an heroic manner," fills space, rather than time, and deals in ultimate verities, in objective truth. "It might be said that satire is the 'truth' of the intellect," he wrote in an article on the subject in *The London Mercury*, and again, "in Satire you reach the great classic lines of the skeleton of things."²⁵

The central figure of Lewis's first stories is an *alter ego* called Ker-Orr, who is referred to as a *soldier* of humor; laughter and the militant are always close in Lewis's "canon," just as manslaughter and man's laughter are deftly mixed in the formidable eye of the Breton rogue called Bestre in these sketches. Ker-Orr gives two rather complicated explanations of "laughter" or satire (though, later, Lewis refers in "laughter" to humor); these are the two sections of *The Wild Body* called "Inferior Religions"

23. Wyndham Lewis, *Tarr*, revised edition, London, Chatto and Windus, 1928, p. 28.

24. Wyndham Lewis, *Men Without Art*, London, Cassell, 1934, p. 112.

25. Wyndham Lewis, "Studies in the Art of Laughter," *The London Mercury*, vol. XXX, no. 180, October, 1934, pp. 511-512.

and "The Meaning of the Wild Body." Published in *The Little Review* for September, 1917, "Inferior Religions" was called by Pound at the time "the most important single document that Lewis has written,"²⁶ while T. S. Eliot saw genius in this squib.²⁷ I propose that the genius that is there is not wholly unindebted to that enemy of the intellect, Henri Bergson.

What emerges from Ker-Orr's explanations is that "laughter" is an attack on life, or everyday reality, which forces the laughers to become detached, as an artist must become detached. In short, "laughter" is a liberating force, a revelation of reality that keeps the primitive, the "thing," at bay.²⁸ This primitive or Roman "thing" (*res*) provides the pabulum of satire, since by contrast with him the laugher will enjoy a heightened sense of separation. It is therefore significant that Lewis lodges his first stories in a primitive Breton community—indeed that he has made such play, until the present (cf. his recent *Rotting Hill*), on the word *rot* which combines the name for a Breton commune and a belch, apart from its connotations in English. But *The Wild Body* is Lewis's only satire which gives us genuine primitives to laugh at; later we are to be asked to laugh at intellectual primitives, persons whom we must agree to see as "things" owing to their (supposedly idiotic) ideological convictions, generally democratic. In consequence these early stories contain some of Lewis's most likeable work, for in them he sees life from beneath and shares the role of alienated individual with the *déclassés*, the bums and rascals he meets on his travels. Never again, at any rate, does quite such a note of affection creep into Lewis's work. And Lewis was obviously fascinated by these primitive Breton peasants in that they defined for him certain literary values. This can be seen in the rather tragic story, "The Cornac and his Wife."

Ker-Orr explains that the primitive Breton peasant designs his laughter to wound, in the sense that his comic feeling does not rise above his circumstances or environment; with them it remains brutal, harsh as his life in the fields, cruel in its necessity for revenge on this life. This is one form of "laughter," cruel scorn torn out of a truly primitive state. But the educated man, Ker-Orr goes on, uses this same comic sense to transcend his environment. That is to say, he is conscious of necessity. This is what Ker-Orr means when he calls the educated man a greater realist than the common peasant, for in him a philosophic understanding, or imaginative appreciation (as in the artist), of the external world enables him to get at the essence of reality. His "laughter" feeds on the primitive and, at the same time, by revealing reality to him, removes him from the primitive condition. "It is a realistic firework, reminiscent of war," says Ker-Orr.

26. Ezra Pound, "Note," *The Little Review*, vol. IV, no. 5, September, 1917, p. 4.

27. T. S. Eliot, "Tarr," *The Egoist*, vol. V, no. 8, September, 1918, p. 105.

28. Wyndham Lewis, *The Wild Body*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1927, p. 239. The reader should be warned that Lewis seems to use the word "humour" on this page to connote satire; but this is extremely unusual, as he progresses.

Like a firework, it rises above the human condition and explodes in derision at it.

This conception, the fruit of experience on his travels coming after having heard Bergson's lectures (for Bergson was giving his lectures on laughter just after Lewis left the Heimann Academy in Munich at the turn of the century and came to Paris), this belief leads the Lewis of *The Wild Body* to a dichotomy that is the basis of his entire satiric theory:

First, to assume the dichotomy of mind and body is necessary here, without arguing it; for it is upon that essential separation that the theory of laughter here proposed is based.

This "separation," one we find of course in Bergson's *Matière et mémoire*, is one Lewis makes in politics, as in aesthetics, between "person" (*persona*) and "thing" (*res*), between "Nature" and "puppet," between truly individual man and man become machine, between what Lewis calls, after the classics, the Not-Self and the Split-Man (contemporary man), between, finally, the human intellect, or "laughing observer," and "the Wild Body."²⁹ It is in this dichotomy that the comic is located for Lewis: "The root of the Comic is to be sought in the sensations resulting from the observations of a *thing* behaving like a person." If we reverse this statement, as Lewis does in effect, in the example he gives following this remark, we have Bergson's very words in *Le Rire*: "*Nous rions toutes les fois qu'une personne nous donne l'impression d'une chose.*"³⁰ It is not possible for me to agree with H. M. McLuhan that Lewis's "theory of the comic as stated in *The Wild Body* is the exact reverse of the Bergsonian theory of laughter."³¹ I can imagine myself agreeing with Professor McLuhan that Lewis's view of life as a whole, his *Weltanschauung*, is the "exact reverse" of that of Bergson, but in satiric theory Lewis's "reverse" is only a spurious one, a matter of words.

For as his chief example of the comic in this sense Lewis provides the

29. *Ibid.*, p. 244. The briefest way to document Lewis's distinction between "person" and "thing" is via two quotations. "*Persona* for the Roman meant a free person only; a slave was not a *person*, but a *res* or *thing*." (Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, p. 318.) Again, more elaborately: "In Rome what constituted 'abnormality' was the being either a slave, a stranger or a minor (of whatever age) within the *potestas* of some head of a family. A slave and, originally, a stranger, a 'peregrinus,' was legally a 'thing' . . . All animals were naturally 'things'—a lion in the forest or a wild bee was a '*res nullius*,' but a watch-dog or a slave was not 'wild,' so could not be affected to another person than his owner by capture." (Lewis, *Paleface*, p. 70.) In general Lewis refers in the *person* to the ideally normal, free, and (for him) formal element in the State, as opposed to the abnormal, or "wild" *thing*. It should be realized that Bergson makes a far looser division in *Le Rire*; it is quite true that he uses the referents in the classical sense, but they are devoid of the authoritarian political overtones with which Lewis invests them.

30. Henri Bergson, *Le Rire. Essai sur la signification du comique*, Paris, Librairie Félix Alcan, 1930, p. 59.

31. H. M. McLuhan, "Wyndham Lewis: His Theory of Art and Communication," *Shenandoah*, vol. IV, nos. 2-3, Summer-Autumn, 1953, p. 84.

picture of a man running for an underground railway or subway train, and just catching it in time, the comic effect being produced by the sight of the man's eye (his intellect, for Lewis) in contrast to his body, which resembles a sack of potatoes. This sight, a Kantian incongruity, is as funny for Lewis as a cabbage perusing Plutarch. "The deepest root of the Comic is to be sought in this anomaly." It is the anomaly of a "thing" endeavoring to behave like an intelligent "person," the fat man catching the train trying to be cleverly calculating like his eye, which is coolly watching the operation. However, since we know from nearly everything he writes that Lewis regards the main mass of mankind as "things," or "Appropriate dummies," one can equally say that the comic results for him from a "person" behaving as a "thing." An element of tragedy enters here, but that is another matter. Lewis suggests Bergson's very theory in *The Wild Body* itself: the comic result arising "because the man's body was not him" is a reciprocal affair. The intellectual "person" inevitably finds himself garbed in a body in our world. Very well. He must at times be condemned to watch this "sack of potatoes" acting in a "thing"-like manner, as much as must the man making for the subway train. In the stories in *The Wild Body* the dichotomy is effected by Lewis outside character. That is, none of the peasants presented really acts as a "person." It is the primitive's clash with the intellect in the person of Ker-Orr that gives the satire. Later, Lewis works the comic dichotomy within character. All the "apes of God" are essentially "things" trying to be "persons," or God-like artists. At the same time Ker-Orr's role of "showman," an observer or "ringmaster of this circus," is retained in the subsequent satire.

The "showman" is an intermediary, who makes the clash with the despised "things." He is not a pure "person." He is merely our communicating agent inside the satire. Thus in *The Apes of God* Horace Zagreus is the "showman" scoffing at the Bloomsbury boobs around him; the "person" of this book is Pierpoint, the master-mind behind the scenes who never actually appears he is so detached (the name is that of the British hangman of the time). In *The Revenge for Love* the "showman" of the satire is really a Spanish gaoler called Don Alvaro, in *The Childermass* it is a Greek called Hyperides, in *The Vulgar Streak* it is Vincent Penhale, and so on. Each of these "showmen" confesses to the theory of the two selves in man, such as we find it in Bergson's *Essai sur les données*. Ker-Orr talks of his two *me's*. In *Time and Western Man* Lewis does the same. Tarr admits, "'Half of myself I have to hide.'" The function of the "showman" is the central one of observing and putting on the stage for us "things," "puppets," or "wild bodies," creatures of such primitivity that they are no more than animal-machines. The life of these creatures, as of the Breton peasants, is so rigid, so circumscribed, that it takes on the character of a caricature of religious ritual. It resembles the dance of an inferior religion.

This is how, I believe, the cryptic section of *The Wild Body* entitled "Inferior Religions" should be taken. Lewis himself tells us that it explains his title. In *Rude Assignment* he says that he called his first writings by this name. To Lord Carlow Lewis, explained:

The pattern of these "wild bodies" is all made up out of the shapes of living people, into which, as you will see, was introduced the principle of a fanatical obsession, which accounted for the pattern: showing how energetic men attach themselves to an inferior cult, lacking a greater one. Since to-day is the day of Inferior Religions, as you will agree, how very topical these stories are!³²

In other words, these characters are slaves at the mercy of social or instinctual drives resembling a pseudo-religion; or again, as Lewis himself puts it, "I would present these puppets, then, as carefully selected specimens of religious fanaticism." They have become mechanisms, not men; they have turned into what Lewis calls tyros and he defines a tyro as "a puppet worked with deft fingers with a screaming voice underneath."³³ In short, the comic "pantin" of Bergson's *Le Rire*.

For Bergson in this work comic rigidity is produced in a literary character by "des mouvements de pantin." The laughter looks on at his comic creation as at "une marionette dont il tient les ficelles." It would be impossible to enumerate the instances of this kind of puppetry in Lewis's satire. They are everywhere, in theme and imagery. *Snooty Baronet* is perhaps the prime example of Lewis's use of Bergson's "pantin," for the hero is actually half a puppet himself, a man with a trepanned skull and a false, or "clockwork," leg. It would literally be possible to compile a small concordance on the number of times Lewis uses the word "puppet" of one character or another in his various satires. The idea is not new, of course. Bergson develops it from Nicole, while Hazlitt, in *The English Comic Writers*, finds it a failing in Ben Jonson that his characters are so like puppets and machines. Lewis finds this Jonson's strength, however. And he seizes on Bergson's great contribution in this field, namely the comic element latent in Cartesian animal-automatism. For Lewis, most men are animals and animals are "mechanical." He gets this from Bergson's *L'Évolution créatrice*, as follows:

Ce qui constitue l'animalité, disons-nous, c'est la faculté d'utiliser un mécanisme à déclenchement pour convertir en actions "explosives" une somme aussi grande que possible d'énergie potentielle accumulée.

Animal-automatism is an aspect of the seventeenth-century war between the mechanists and vitalists well covered in a general way by Leonora Rosenfield's *From Beast-Machine to Man-Machine*. Descartes was not the first to be fascinated by the regularity of animal behavior but, under

32. Carlow Collection. Quoted by kind permission of Mr. A. Zwemmer.

33. Wyndham Lewis, "Note on Tyros," [Editorial] *The Tyro: A Review of the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Design*, no. 1, London, The Egoist Press, April, 1921, p. 2.

the pressure of physiological discoveries, he took the idea forward quickly and drew reactions from other thinkers, reactions that helped to characterize and identify them. The author of *cogito, ergo sum* (meaning we exist inasmuch as we reason consciously) came to deny conscious reasoning, and so free will, to animals: "Ex animalium quibusdam actionibus valde perfectis, suspicamur ea liberum arbitrium non habere."³⁴ There are hints in the *Discours de la méthode* that a machine in the shape of an animal might be no different from an animal itself, and Descartes evidently planned to construct such beast-machines; what worried him, and other mechanists engaged on this side of the controversy, was that beasts felt pain (Fontenelle kicked a pregnant bitch, and it yelped). Interestingly, the hero of Lewis's recent *Self Condemned* is called René and frowns "à la Descartes." But Lewis's comic man-machine is lineally closer to the eighteenth-century French materialist, and friend of Frederick II of Prussia, Julien Offray de La Mettrie, author of *L'Homme-Machine* (1748) which eliminated nearly all non-mechanical elements in the corporeal universe altogether. La Mettrie conceded a soul, but as this was totally conditioned by the body it was scarcely a spiritual possibility. La Mettrie supposed, in fact, the "pantin" which Bergson saw as comic and which Lewis parades in clock-work packs throughout his fiction.

No reader can pick up any one of Lewis's satires without noticing the man-machine in them. In *The Enemy of the Stars* Arghol yawns in "mechanical spasms." Kreisler of *Tarr* follows Bertha like a machine; Bertha is herself "machine-like." Anastasya, of the same work, is an "even more substantial machine." The characters of *The Wild Body* are often referred to as "automata" or "machines." Mr. Patricks, the shopkeeper of *Rotting Hill*, who significantly resembles Jean-Paul Sartre in looks, is described as "a wound-up toy."³⁵ Lord Osmund of *The Apes of God* seems to come straight out of La Mettrie's repertoire, giving "the effect of the jouissant animal—the licking, eating, sniffing, fat-muzzled machine."³⁶ But the whole of this book might have been based on *Le Rire*—"This was an all-puppet cast." Or as the Blackshirt says, "They are puppets not people."

Of course *Le Rire* contains many ideas that any satirist might be expected to hold: the idea of the indifference ("insensibilité") of satiric laughter as opposed to the benevolence of humor, the need for some human target for satire to be truly affective, are two. And there are naturally distinctions to be made; when Bergson writes of our laughter being the laughter of a group, Lewis would probably say that this was humor, rather than satire. However, Bergson is speaking in a sociological, rather than literary, sense here; laughter, he suggests, is a social gesture which unites us, often against a character who is comic by virtue of being

34. René Descartes, *Œuvres de Descartes, publiées . . . sous les auspices du Ministère de l'Instruction publique*, L. Cerf, 1897-1913, X, p. 219.

35. Wyndham Lewis, *Rotting Hill*, Chicago, Henry Regnery, 1952, p. 185.

36. Wyndham Lewis, *The Apes of God*, London, The Arthur Press, 1930, p. 355.

anti-social. Nor would Lewis accept Bergson's conception of the comic in words and sentences in its entirety, I think. Beyond these reservations, Bergson's *Le Rire* seems to me practically a primer of Lewisian satire.

For Bergson, as for Lewis later, a man becomes funny when the "élan vital" runs down in him, or when he deliberately arrests this vital drive. Directly this happens, we read in *Le Rire*, he atrophies to a machine and we laugh at "un effet de raideur" or "raideur de mécanique... où l'on voudrait trouver la souplesse attentive et la vivante flexibilité d'une personne." This rigidity—"Automatisme, raideur, pli contracté et gardé"—becomes the basic comic deformity for Bergson, as for Lewis. It is a lack of consciousness, of human awareness ("Le comique est inconscient"), which is actually corrected by laughter—"Cette raideur est le comique, et le rire en est le châtiment."

This idea, of the retarding of the "élan vital" to the status of mechanical man, is also suggested in *Matière et mémoire*,³⁷ but it is more fully developed in *Le Rire*. Here, as an example of the comic, Bergson proposes an assassin leaving a train and thereby infringing local company rules. It is interesting that Lewis also uses a train episode to illustrate his comic theory in *The Wild Body*. Bergson sums up the formula for laughter in *Le Rire* as follows: "Les attitudes, gestes et mouvements du corps humain sont risibles dans l'exacte mesure où ce corps nous fait penser à une simple mécanique." This is the comic "pantin," the "mécanique plaqué sur du vivant," which for Bergson is true satire. And he even suggests that the artist bringing about this effect is classic. For Bergson is not quite so irresponsible as Lewis makes him out to be and, in *L'Evolution créatrice*, he actually admits that the intellect is sometimes superior to the instinct in apprehending conscious reality, though the instinct can alone seize the subconscious. The intellect, Bergson here says in words that Lewis does no more than repeat, should play on "la matière brute, en particulier sur des solides."³⁸ But Bergson called for intellect and instinct, Peter and Paul, to co-operate in apprehending reality, and this the narrowly intellectual Lewis would not concede. For Lewis, art is "unaided" intellect. Bergson—and in this Hulme supported him³⁹—could not admit disinterested art, in the sense of art divorced from participation in life. This he saw, in *L'Evolution créatrice*, as a luxury, like speculation.

Bergson, finally, did even more for Lewis than provide him with the comic "pantin," for he suggested that the rigid automatism, lack of awareness, and "distraction" of the comic type gives us also the comic situation or theme.

37. Henri Bergson, *Matière et mémoire. Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1900, p. 107.

38. Bergson, *L'Evolution créatrice*, p. 167; and at p. 169 Bergson is categorical—"Notre intelligence ne se représente clairement que l'immobilité."

39. Hulme, *Speculations*, p. 144.

Le comique est un côté de la personne par lequel elle ressemble à une chose, cet aspect des événements humains qui imite, par sa raideur d'un genre tout particulier, le mécanisme pur et simple, l'automatisme, enfin le mouvement sans la vie.

A rigid automatism in human affairs and events, Bergson suggested, also produces a comic effect similar to that produced by rigidity in the human personality. What he calls "distraction" in human affairs as in human beings produces precisely that logic of the absurd, that absentmindedness or lack of awareness that is the theme of Lewis's major satire, *The Apes of God*. And are we not told that the characters of *The Wild Body* are "little monuments of logic?" In *Le Rire* Bergson even mentions Don Quixote with whom Ker-Orr expresses affinity:

Toute distraction est comique... Une distraction systématique comme celle de Don Quichotte est ce qu'on peut imaginer au monde de plus comique.

Thus, Bergson says, one of the main functions of satire is to restore awareness or consciousness to the human being and to society. It must wake men up, prevent them from living absurdly unaware, in dreams. The only point of *Le Rire* which Lewis cannot be said to have repeated as his own is the theory of the "insociabilité" of the comic, for what Lewis castigates is too much sociability. Bergson, however, sees the comic in a typically generous manner, as uniting mankind, whereas Lewis apparently sincerely feels that today the satirist's function is to disrupt our "group-rhythms" and startle out of them powerful individuals.

In conclusion, I should add that this seems to me only one instance of the indebtedness of an anti-romanticist to his victim. More versed minds than mine will know of other cases. There are others, and that there are lends strength to the view of critics like Régis Michaud and W. Y. Tindall, namely that there has been nothing more romantic in our century than these perfervid anti-romanticists. Partly because the great French writers of our time have been so great (already in *Jean Barois* Roger Martin du Gard showed an enviably "classical" impartiality on this vexed subject), and partly because the French anti-romantic critics have not been, on the whole, important creative artists, the English anti-romanticists are interesting on a secondary level. One can say, for example, that the attack on Bergson, and what he is alleged to represent, is integrated in a more fascinating way in Lewis' novels than in Benda's. One can equally say that today the laurelled head of Bergson rises untroubled over the ashes of this dispute. For this was a rare teacher who could inspire minds and gifts as dissimilar as those of Lewis and Proust; this was indeed a great thinker and a kind man.

New York City

REVIEWS

La Vie de Malherbe: Apprentissages et luttes (1555-1610). Par René Fromilhague. Paris: Armand Colin, 1954. Pp. 11 + 452.

Malherbe: Technique et création poétique. Par René Fromilhague. Paris: Armand Colin, 1954. Pp. 7 + 665.

These two complementary studies presented as a doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne are the fruit of ten years of painstaking labor. The thesis itself, which purports to make a new contribution to the field of Malherbian scholarship, consists of a highly detailed internal study of Malherbe's strophic forms and prosody, illuminated by a fresh biographical assessment of the poet's life from birth until 1610.

In spite of a century's scholarly work on the poet's life carried on by such investigators as Roux-Alphéran, Gournay, Trébutien, Gasté and Bourrienne, the three outstanding biographies of Malherbe leave something to be desired, according to Fromilhague, and his position is well taken. Lalanne's short biography published as a foreword to his edition (1862-69) was written before the period of extensive research that was carried on in the eighties and nineties of the past century. The elegant biography by the Duc de Broglie published in 1897 is also incomplete and partially out-dated. That of Jean de Celles published in 1937, while giving a warm and gracious portrait of the poet, is far from exhaustive and unequal in proportion. It is Fromilhague's intention to synthesize the results obtained by previous scholars.

One of the most notable conclusions drawn from his study of the poet's apprenticeship is that the years (1576-86) spent in Provence as secretary of the Grand Prieur were far more productive and important than has ordinarily been believed. Using two kinds of evidence, comparison with the works of contemporary poets and technical features of Malherbe's verse, Fromilhague succeeds in establishing strong presumptions that several poems such as the well-known "Victoire de la Constance" published in 1597 were composed during this early period. Some of the parallels adduced in evidence of La Roque's influence on Malherbe seem forced and contribute little to the main line of argument, which is nevertheless valid.

To the difficult years in Caen (1586-95) belong the four elegiac poems: "Aux Ombres de Damon," the "Consolation à Cléophon" (the original of the famous "Consolation à Du Périer"), the sonnet "Sur la mort d'un gentilhomme qui fut assassiné" and "L'Épithaphe de Monsieur d'Ifs." Fromilhague stresses the important role of the intellectual climate of the Norman capital—impregnated with humanism in general and Christian stoicism in particular—in orienting Malherbe toward a rigorous, rational conception of the poet's art.

Malherbe's second sojourn (1595-1605) in Provence witnessed a further elaboration of the poet's coherent doctrine. A study of the corrections made in Montchrétien's *Sophonisbe* leads the author to reiterate the conclusion formulated by Raymond Lebègue that they show his doctrine to have been already formed. Consequently Fromilhague is led to modify F. Brunot's conclusions on the significance of Du Vair's relationship with Malherbe. He finds that the great and eloquent Stoic did not contribute to the formation of Malherbe's poetic doctrine which is in essence a coherent system of technical prescriptions but did indeed confirm and encourage the poet in formulating his concept of literature as a serious discipline.

Restating Brunot's conclusions on the date of the break with Desportes, the leading poet at Court, Fromilhague slightly narrows the compass of the limiting dates to December 1, 1605, and January 1606 with a presumption in favor of a date close to December 15. The rising importance of Malherbe as a Court poet is attested by his first official summons as the King's poet on February 2, 1609, to celebrate Henri IV's new passion for Charlotte de Montmorency (still with no monetary outlay on the part of the Vert Galant).

Turning from consideration of poems written in behalf of others, Fromilhague then devotes two chapters totaling more than 100 pages to a discussion of Malherbe's "aventures galantes" in Paris. The first and the more interesting of these chapters is a detailed account of the poet's love affair with the Vicomtesse d'Auchy, in which the author establishes the chronology of fourteen poems written for this lady. While the general outlines of Malherbe's intrigue with the Vicomtesse are well-known, those of his "galanterie" with the Comtesse de la Roche are much less so. Fromilhague has reconstructed this intrigue, pointing out that several letters previously considered to belong to those written to Caliste, were in reality addressed to the Comtesse de la Roche. In the case of the last and least important of these affairs, a study of manuscript 534 of the Musée Condé and the chronology of the poet's activities leads to the inference that *Crisante*, the object of Malherbe's affection was none other than Angélique Paulet, the future "lionne" of the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

The tenth and final chapter of this biography summarizes Malherbe's relationship with his fellow-poets during the period 1605-1610. Malherbe's place in French literature is assessed in the conclusion of the truncated biography, presented as a complementary thesis, in the following striking metaphor: "sa fonction, à l'aube de la littérature moderne, nous paraît celle d'un générateur de puissance: il lance le courant classique en lui communiquant une tension qui lui permettra d'aimer tout le XVII^e siècle et de le traverser sans s'épuiser" (p. 419).

The principal thesis, *Malherbe, Technique et création poétique* treats in minute detail the elaboration of the poet's technical doctrine. The avowed purpose of this work is to define Malherbe's doctrine as it concerns

poetic technique by a study of the *Commentaire sur Desportes* and Malherbe's poetic works. Its second major object is to determine the scope of Malherbe's originality by a comparison of his technique with that of other poets, Maynard and Racan as his disciples, Desportes representing his predecessors and Bertaut as an important contemporary. Thirdly, this analysis will show that Malherbe invented increasingly refined restraints for his Muse, placing ever more emphasis upon technical perfection.

The first of the three major parts of the thesis is entitled "L'Evolution de la Poésie et de la Création poétique de Ronsard à Malherbe" (p. 33-139). Fromilhague views this poetic evolution as a reflection of the philosophic change which substituted a deliberate rationalism for the natural humanistic ebullience of the first half of the sixteenth century. After 1580, intellectual life will be dominated by rationalism and Christian stoicism. The mature Malherbe because of his temperament and associations found many aspects of the prevalent rationalism and Stoicism congenial.

Fromilhague then turns his attention to an examination of the Malherbian technique, but only as it concerns strophic form and rhyme. P. Martinon, in his well-known work *Les Strophes*, has stated that Malherbe's prosodic originality and influence are nil. Fromilhague readily concedes that Malherbe's strophic inventions are strictly limited. However, he proposes to show that Malherbe was original in his use of strophic forms and that the Norman poet gave constant evidence of a dogged determination to affirm his prosodic independence. Furthermore, he claims that Malherbe exerted considerable influence on the use of strophic forms in the seventeenth century in all the important points where he demonstrated his originality. Two general conclusions sum up this study of strophic forms: the principal varieties of strophe used in the poet's mature years have a prototype in the works of his youth and, secondly, the various forms of strophe enjoy successive vogues in the works of his maturity. Moreover, Malherbe's lyricism is by nature essentially and almost exclusively strophic.

The second and longest part of this work treats the structure of the Malherbian strophe. Since there is no completely satisfactory method of determining the "coupes" of a strophe, Fromilhague has chosen to use chiefly the syntactic arrangement of the strophe as the most objective and generally useful criterion. An additional argument adduced in favor of this syntactic criterion is the fact that Malherbe's verse shows a constant effort on the poet's part to make the syntactic pauses coincide with those required by the sense of his lines. In this effort to conciliate sense and syntax, Malherbe, according to Fromilhague, made continual progress beginning with the *Larmes de Saint-Pierre* and attained a relative peak of perfection in the years 1610-1615, while showing signs of a certain technical regression after 1620. A comparison with Desportes reveals that on one important point—that of the median caesura—Desportes is a fore-

runner of Malherbe. "Il rend la règle impérative bien avant Malherbe, qui n'y parviendra qu'en 1610, après combien d'efforts patients" (p. 270). As for Bertaut, representing Malherbe's own generation, his work shows that French poetry aspired to regularity long before the statement of Malherbe's doctrine. However, Malherbe alone had the will to pursue the realization of these aspirations with methodical and conscientious effort. Indeed, it is apparent that formulation of abstract prosodic principles preceded their embodiment in practice. While emphasizing the positive contributions of Malherbe's doctrinal rigor, Fromilhague is careful to point out the negative consequences implicit in his attitude, the same consequences so bitterly attacked by Malherbe's adversaries: "A force de rigueur, Malherbe finit par devenir son propre geôlier, le plus impitoyable; et, pour exiger de lui-même une création parfaite, se condamne à la stérilité" (p. 440).

But did Malherbe accomplish anything more than to hasten an evolution begun before his time? Fromilhague sees in him "un inventeur qui a renouvelé les méthodes de travail, un architecte qui a donné un sens nouveau à l'entreprise." Malherbe made this progress continuous and gave it a rational basis. He established a doctrine of difficulty. His strophic technique determined the essential characteristics of his style and even his inspiration.

These two companion volumes constitute a well-documented and detailed confirmation of the findings of modern scholarship on Malherbe. The author recognizes his debt to M. R. Lebègue in so far as methodology and general perspective on Malherbe are concerned. Two features of a sound historical approach characterize the method: a continual emphasis on chronology and the comparison of Malherbe's poetic work with that of his contemporaries, Maynard, Racan, Bertaut and Desportes. The painstaking statistical comparisons corroborate a number of opinions concerning Malherbe's poetic technique that have heretofore existed solely as intuitive impressions. Readers of the present studies will look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the appearance of the Lebègue-Fromilhague edition of Malherbe's works as part of the commemoration of the fourth centenary of the poet's birth as well as to further works of solid erudition on Malherbe and his time already projected by M. Fromilhague.

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Biblioteca de traductores españoles. Por Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Edited by Enrique Sánchez Reyes. 4 vols. Santander: Aldus, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1952-1953. Pp. viii + 1697.

The scholarship of Spain's distinguished polygraph, Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, continues to command attention with the posthumous publication of his *Biblioteca de traductores españoles*. The volumes of this work comple-

ment the ten comprising the *Bibliografía hispano-latina clásica*, another collection of Menéndez' papers released posthumously during the years 1950 through 1953. While their interest is not, of course, biographical, both publications evoke, inferentially, a picture of the youthful prodigy being formed in a classical humanism, a conception of Menéndez which comes less frequently to mind than that of the gray champion of orthodoxy or the historian of critical ideas in Spain. As the editor of the *Biblioteca* has observed, the greater part of the notes and entries on Spanish translators are dated from 1874 to 1878, or between Menéndez' eighteenth and twenty-second years. This is not to suggest that either the *Biblioteca* or the *Bibliografía* is the work of a genius not yet matured. The energy and ambition manifest in these, it is true, belong to the young man, but the comprehension of problems relative to Spanish humanism is born of an intellect older than its owner. His attitude is adequately represented by this statement made in connection with Greek erudition in Spain: "Los estudios helenísticos tienen larga y gloriosa historia en nuestro suelo. El exponerla debe ser objeto y constituir parte notable de la *Historia de la Filología en España*, obra no escrita aún, y no poco apetecida por los doctos. Nosotros sólo haremos brevísimas indicaciones en la parte relativa a traductores, objeto especial de nuestro trabajo" (III, 100).

Matching in enthusiasm the seventeenth-century Hellenist Vincente Mariner, who undertook to translate into Spanish all of the Greek classics, Menéndez endeavored to record every translation and every classical influence in Spanish letters. The *Bibliografía* is largely an alphabetical listing of Latin authors together with citations of their vogue in Spain. The *Biblioteca* deals with more than 300 writers, poets, and humanists (also arranged alphabetically) who made translations into Spanish from whatever source, ancient or modern. For all of the early research ungrudgingly given to so vast a project, Menéndez cannot in truth be said to have reached his goal. The accounts of the translators are of uneven quality and of varying lengths. In many instances the entry under a translator will consist of but a few *apuntes* concerned with the titles and editions of his works or perhaps the location of his manuscripts. Generally, the technique of presentation utilized in the *Biblioteca* is to offer first matter pertaining to the biography and literary fortune of the translator under discussion. Then follows an enumeration of his translations, grouped, if his activity has been great, according to the several languages from which they have been rendered. Menéndez appears to have examined personally almost every work of which he has made a record, and when he has not seen the translation in question, he is quick to make this clear. For secondary-source data he relies cautiously on the Latin bibliography of Nicolás Antonio and more confidently on Gallardo's *Biblioteca española de un ensayo de libros raros y curiosos*, which, like the *Biblioteca* of Menéndez, is also a posthumous publication. The wealth of bibliography accumulated by Menéndez will be difficult to estimate. The

ultimate valuation of the Greek translations covered here, for example, will probably be more imposing—if the comparison may be permitted—than the total effort of Charles Graux and Émile Legrand in their respective bibliographies of Greek manuscripts and books in Spain. There is an eighty-page treatment of Vincente Mariner which only begins to catalogue his translations from the Greek. On the other hand, there are only casual allusions to such worthy sixteenth-century Hellenists as the brothers Vergara and Hernán Núñez, *El Comendador griego*, and perhaps for want of their documents nothing in the way of an investigation of these scholars is promised.

It must be emphasized again that the *Biblioteca* in its present form is not a homogeneous product of scholarship and that one must not look for a consistent performance in its pages. In this regard let us consider the section devoted to the poet Juan de Arguijo (1567–1623). Menéndez aptly summarizes a characteristic of Arguijo's verse by writing: "Muchos de los sonetos de Arguijo son imitaciones, bastante directas, de clásicos griegos y latinos" (I, 155). In illustration of this, however, he quotes only two short poems and fails to designate the titles and sources of the remaining imitations. One of the poems selected is a sonnet, "A una estatua de Niobe que labró Praxíteles," based in part on a popular epigram of Ausonius, who in his turn, had carefully imitated an epigram of the Greek Anthology. There is evidence in these and other of his books that Menéndez knew the Greek epigrams well enough to identify the more prominent ones—not at all a mean accomplishment when one reflects that there are upwards of 4000 epigrams in the Anthology. Yet he precipitously declares Arguijo's debt to Ausonius, declining to attribute it to an even older source, and neglecting to pause over Arguijo's obvious enlargement of the original theme. In reality, as the reviewer has learned from his own study, the sonnet is a composite of epigrams on the Niobe motif, and all that Arguijo owes with certainty to Ausonius is to be found in the second half of the octet. The sestet is the result of a direct consultation with the Anthology allowing no possibility that Ausonius was an intermediary.

For another specimen of this occasionally uncritical, hurried approach there is need only to read the section on the poetry of Agustín de Salazar y Torres (1642–75). In listing Salazar's translations Menéndez takes at face value the captions found in Rivadeynera's *Biblioteca de autores españoles* (XXXII), and so gives renewed life and authority to the errors committed originally by either Salazar or his editors. One of the more remarkable of these concerns an "epigrama griego de Matavio, traducido al latín por Escaligero, *Legerat aureolo Doris de crine capillum*" (IV, 186). Matavio is unfortunately nowhere to be discovered in the Greek Anthology. The authorship of the epigram, which moved a small squadron of Spanish poets to imitation, belongs to Paulus Silentiarius.

The sections on the translations of Fray Luis de León, Quevedo, and

Sánchez de las Brozas, among others, are ample and rewarding. The Horatian influences on Fray Luis are represented along with the Hebraic, and the master satirist Quevedo is seen to be one of the tireless humanists of his day. The pages given to *El Brocense* yield more satisfaction, at least for the purposes of this reviewer, than Aubrey Bell's small monograph on the same savant. The variety of translations noticed has its special interest. Apart from the Greek and Latin classics, one can read notes on renderings of Molière and Shakespeare by the younger Moratín and can try the mettle of MacPherson's *Ossian* done into Spanish by Juan Nicasio Gallego. There is, too, an unexpected version of *The Merchant of Venice* by Menéndez himself.

The *Biblioteca* presents a cavalcade of scholars and pedants ranging from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth. One traces the quickening activity which reached an apex in the sixteenth, then slackened in the seventeenth, only to reawaken in the eighteenth. If we cannot justly demand a full achievement in the *Biblioteca*, which lay for many years unedited and abandoned, we can recognize in it Menéndez' encyclopedic grasp of names and works. In illuminating even the most obscure of the learned writers—especially those of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—he has exposed the fundamental stratum of Spanish humanism, the existence of which has been seriously disputed in the past, and he has provided our contemporary Hispanists with an opportunity to study and understand a movement which is not necessarily best explained by the relatively few men whose contributions have managed to survive for our inspection.

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L'Hellénisme des Romantiques. Par René Canat. Paris: Didier, 1953. Tome II: *Le Romantisme des Grecs, 1826-1840*, pp. 368.

On sait qu'au long de quarante années René Canat s'était employé à reconstruire sur des bases beaucoup plus larges sa *Renaissance de la Grèce antique*, publiée dès 1912 chez Hachette. Explorant beaucoup plus avant à travers l'histoire, l'archéologie, les relations de voyages, l'art, la littérature, il s'était efforcé de restituer dans toute son ampleur ce renouvellement extraordinaire de l'hellénisme qui s'est opéré en plein romantisme, dans l'apparent triomphe des brumes du Nord. Il s'agissait de faire ressortir, à une époque significative entre toutes, la pérennité d'une tradition toujours vivace en France, qui jusque dans ses affaiblissements apparents se régénère, prend des formes originales et suscite en l'espèce un vaste mouvement: celui qui, par de multiples voies, mène de Chénier au Parnasse. Véritable renaissance, en effet. Mais comment le romantisme, qui a tout renouvelé, n'eût-il pas aussi renouvelé l'hellénisme?

La mort a surpris René Canat lorsqu'il avait achevé sa vaste enquête et mis au net son manuscrit définitif. Mais la publication de l'ouvrage n'en

est pas moins assurée par les soins de la Librairie Marcel Didier. Un premier volume, *La Grèce retrouvée*, avait déjà paru: il englobait les années 1813-1825, considérées comme celles où l'on redécouvre "avec curiosité et sympathie, mais sans désir d'imitation" une Grèce "ignorée et dédaignée". *Le Romantisme des Grecs* donne aujourd'hui la suite jusqu'en 1840: période où se précisent les affinités, non sans "accaparements" abusifs. Un troisième volume, *L'Éveil du Parnasse*, poussera l'étude jusqu'à 1852. Ainsi se parachèvera cet *Hellénisme des romantiques*, si longtemps attendu, et qui consacrera le labeur d'une vie presque entière.

C'est dire qu'on ne lit pas ces pages sans émotion, mais aussi quelque gêne. On a scrupule à juger en toute rigueur une œuvre qui parvient comme un message d'outre-tombe. On craint aussi de se prononcer trop vite sur le second volet d'un triptyque, dont le troisième reste à paraître. On ne saurait pourtant fermer les yeux sur de trop visibles défauts.

Les coquilles, d'abord. Elles sont inévitables quand l'auteur lui-même ne peut réviser son manuscrit, si définitif soit-il, ni corriger ses épreuves. La pitié de l'éditeur a paré de son mieux à ces inconvénients. Elle ne pouvait les supprimer, et même les quatre pages d'*errata* jointes au volume inquiètent, plus qu'elles ne rassurent. Elles rassemblent trop de lapsus et de bévues cocasses pour que la liste en puisse être complète. Nous pourrions, pour notre part, ajouter beaucoup: *Bory Saint-Vincent* pour *Bory de Saint-Vincent* (p. 61), *Panhypocritiade* pour *Panhypocrisiade* (p. 232), *L. de Rouchaud* pour *L. de Ronchaud* (p. 245), *Laforcade* pour *Lafoscade* (p. 256), etc.

Les erreurs, plus encore. Où a-t-on vu que J. Janin eût jamais été "jeune-France" (p. 141)? que Vitet fût "ami" de Gautier (p. 224)? que Gautier fût "bousingot", quand lui-même et ses compagnons du Petit Cénacle se défendaient tant de l'être? "C'est dans *La France littéraire* que paraissent *Les Jeunes-France* en 1833" (p. 225, n.). Or, sur les six nouvelles que comprend le recueil, deux avaient paru dès 1832, l'une non seulement dans *La France littéraire* mais aussi dans *Le Cabinet de lecture*, l'autre dans *Le Cabinet de lecture* encore et les *Annales romantiques*, non dans *La France littéraire*; et les quatre autres ne furent publiées pour la première fois qu'en volume. Dans *La France littéraire* encore "paraissent en 1834-1835 les articles... qui feront le livre des *Grotesques*" (p. 225): c'est oublier l'étude la plus importante, sur Scarron, parue dix ans plus tard dans la *Revue des Deux Mondes*. "Le *Figaro*, fondé en 1826" (p. 141): comme s'il n'y avait pas eu plusieurs *Figaros*, fondés successivement!

Références et dates restent donc approximatives. Dès lors, comment suivre de façon stricte les progressions? "*Le Vrai, le Beau et le Bien* est de 1836" (p. 226). On préférerait le titre exact: *Du vrai, du beau et du bien*. On voudrait que fussent rappelés surtout les cours professés par Cousin à la Sorbonne de 1815 à 1821, et d'où le livre est sorti: décalage de vingt années! Trop souvent l'information se tient aux dehors, à des étiquettes lues trop vite et sans recours personnel aux textes. Pourquoi citer *La*

France industrielle, où Gautier n'a fait paraître que deux ou trois articles, au même titre que *Le Cabinet de lecture* ou *La France littéraire*, où il en publie des séries, et sans mentionner le *Monde dramatique* ou *La Chronique de Paris*, où sa collaboration est si révélatrice? Pourquoi renvoyer aux *Salons* de 1836 à 1838 dans la *Presse* et à celui de 1841 dans la *Revue de Paris*, comme si la série se trouvait interrompue, alors que ceux de 1839 et 1840 retiennent tout aussi bien l'attention? Et que de jugements contestables ou sommaires: Vigny "poète antique par tempérament, par éducation et par goût" (p. 241), Petrus Borel "hurluberlu" (p. 270), la "merveilleuse" préface de *Cromwell* (p. 9), "grâce lumineuse et ailée" (p. 255) en ce début de *Rolla*, si déclamatoire et proche de C. Delavigne, — ou encore, à propos d'Anacréon, Sainte-Beuve mal venu à "faire le malin avec son érudition de fraîche date" (p. 247)!

Que de lacunes surtout! Rien sur le *Pèlerinage de Childe-Harold*, paru en 1825 et esquivé au tome I (p. 280). Presque rien sur les *Orientales*. Et pourquoi souligner vers 1837-1840 l'admiration de Hugo pour Eschyle et la tragédie grecque (p. 248), sans marquer le rapport avec la prochaine "trilogie" des *Burgraves*? De Gautier, pourquoi citer *Niobé* ou l'hymne médiocre *Au sommeil*, non *Le Passage du Thermodon* (1838), beaucoup plus développé, bel exemple d'hellénisme vu à travers Rubens, ou *La Chaîne d'or* (1836), conte d'après l'antique et qui annonce de loin P. Louÿs? Sauf quelques exceptions, Barbier, Brizeux, Laprade, voire Béranger, cité au tome I (p. 298) pour un seul texte entre bien d'autres également probants,¹ presque rien sur les *minores*. Et il eût fallu dépouiller les *Annales romantiques*, l'*Almanach des Muses*, toute la floraison des *Keepsakes*, où se perçoivent si bien les fluctuations du goût.

Même déconvenue si l'on passe des poètes aux voyageurs ou traducteurs. Rien sur la seconde édition en 6 volumes du *Voyage de la Grèce* de Pouqueville (1826-1827). La *Relation de l'expédition de lord Byron en Grèce*, traduite de l'anglais par J. Parisot (1825), n'est citée qu'à travers les commentaires du *Globe*. Les *Odes d'un jeune Grec*, par Pagano Soutzo (1828) ne sont pas mentionnées. Aucune référence aux travaux pourtant nombreux qui ont apporté sur la Grèce des romantiques tant de lumières: *Les Voyageurs français en Grèce au XIX^e siècle* d'Eugène Levcinesco (1909), *Les Voyageurs français dans l'Orient européen* de Nicolas Iorga (1928), les *French Travelers in Greece* par Emile Malakis (1925), *L'Exotisme dans la littérature française depuis Chateaubriand* par P. Jourda (1938).² D'une façon générale, sauf d'assez rares exceptions pour une part médiocrement

1. Cf. par exemple, *Chansons*, éd. Perrotin 1856, II, 31 sqq., *L'ombre d'Anacréon*; 40 sqq., *Le pigeon messager*; 122 sqq., *Psara*; 315 sqq., *Le vin de Chypre*; ou *Mémoires* de Béranger recueillis par Savinien Lapointe, éd. 1857, p. 96: "Il avait une grande passion pour la littérature grecque . . .", ou p. 276: "En fait de sculpture, il admirait trop les Grecs pour être juste envers Pradier . . .", etc.

2. Il faut y joindre aujourd'hui l'excellente édition des *Orientales*, récemment publiée par Elisabeth Barineau dans la collection des *Textes français modernes*, mais que René Canat ne pouvait consulter.

justifiées, on comprend mal une sorte de dédain ou d'indifférence à l'égard des ouvrages antérieurs, qui pourtant eussent fait éviter nombre d'erreurs et permis des recherches beaucoup plus efficaces.

De même, le nombre des revues dépouillées reste insuffisant. Le *Globe* est l'objet d'une attention presque exclusive. Sans nier son vif intérêt, ni celui de quelques revues citées çà et là, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, *Revue de Paris*, *Journal des Savants*, *l'Artiste*, on voudrait bien d'autres sondages: dans le *Mercure de France au XIX^e siècle*, *l'Europe Littéraire*, le *Constitutionnel*, le *Voleur*, etc. Un exemple entre mille. Que l'on consulte pour la décade 1833-1843 la table du *Magasin Pittoresque*, publication alors très répandue et à laquelle collaboraient des littérateurs, des historiens, des hommes de science: on ne relève pas moins de soixante-dix références à des articles sur la Grèce ancienne et moderne, envisagée sous ses aspects les plus divers, poésie, théâtre, philosophie, beaux-arts, mœurs, détail de la vie privée, etc. N'est-ce pas l'illustration et la preuve de cette sympathie grandissante que l'on cherche à ressaisir?

Enfin et surtout, on regrette un plan tout extérieur, qui rompt la chronologie, contraint à de perpétuels retours en arrière, et fausse les perspectives. Vue de l'esprit que cette "leçon du marbre", qui mène à un "poème du marbre", lequel impose le "retour à l'hellénisme". Pareille progression relève de la rhétorique, non de la réalité des choses. Il eût fallu situer le mouvement dans l'histoire, saisir un à un et doser les facteurs d'évolution, faire à mesure la part de la politique, des influences artistiques, de la mode grandissante, suivre l'extension du mouvement dans toute la variété de la littérature, des revues et des journaux, dégager et caractériser les originalités vraies: étude littéraire, fondée sur la sociologie des idées et des thèmes, mais aboutissant à un éclairage précis des œuvres les plus marquantes. En ce sens l'étude serait à refondre et à compléter.

Mais dans la forme confuse où elle se présente, elle apporte beaucoup. Elle fait ressortir l'importance d'un courant sans lequel ne se comprend pas le passage du romantisme à *l'art pour l'art* et au Parnasse. Elle réunit un ensemble considérable de faits, de textes souvent peu connus et dispersés. Elle dégage quelques-unes des influences en effet prépondérantes, soulignant en particulier le rôle du *Globe*, celui de critiques tels que Villemain, Vitet, Nisard, Planche, l'incidence des œuvres étrangères et la part de l'érudition. Spécialement dans ce volume, elle montre le prestige croissant d'une Grèce d'abord romantisée, puis progressivement épurée, idéalisée dans la plastique des lignes et des formes, plus vivante que jamais pourtant. Emouvante histoire, qui fait désirer sa conclusion en un troisième volume pourvu d'une table générale et d'un index: condition indispensable pour que ce très méritoire ensemble devienne, tant par ses résultats que par ses matériaux mêmes, un précieux instrument de travail.

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Provençal Regionalism: A Study of the Movement in the Revue Félibréenne, Le Feu, and Other Reviews of Southern France. By Alphonse V. Roche. Evanston: Northwestern University Press (Northwestern University Studies, Humanities Series, v. 30), 1954. Pp. xix + 271.

Il n'y a pas grande témérité, je crois, à poser en principe que, si le nouveau provençal eût été artifice pur, comme il a pu sembler en nombre de ses phases, les remous de notre époque en auraient eu facilement raison. Ou s'il fallait attribuer son succès au seul ascendant de Frédéric Mistral, la disparition du barde, il y a quarante ans révolus, eût donné le signal de la débâcle. Or, rien de tel ne s'est passé. Non seulement le Félibrige a célébré son centenaire en 1954, mais tout en lui témoigne d'une robuste vitalité. Débordant les frontières de la Provence proprement dite, il a poussé en terre languedocienne,—à Montpellier, à Toulouse,—des rejetons si vigoureux, qu'ils ont tendance à déplacer vers l'Ouest le centre de gravité du mouvement. Non content de fleurir dans les cénacles poétiques, il a pris racine à l'Université; et, ce faisant, il a pu perdre de son éclat primitif, mais il s'est dépouillé et discipliné. D'un mot, il n'est plus tant le chanfre sonore que l'exégète patient des traditions qui l'ont nourri.

M. Roche connaît admirablement son sujet, mieux que personne aux Etats-Unis. Il est à coup sûr le seul Provençal de pure souche qui puisse s'aventurer à écrire en anglais, dans un anglais châtié, un livre de fond sur les doctrines félibréennes. Encore possède-t-il la sagesse des forts, qui circonscrit et domine la matière au lieu de s'en laisser écraser. On ne trouvera pas dans son ouvrage l'historique complet du régionalisme provençal depuis ses lointains débuts jusqu'aux manifestations récentes, postérieures à la deuxième guerre mondiale, qui en attestent l'expansion et la survie. On y trouvera, en revanche, l'étude approfondie, et menée de main de maître, de ce qu'on pourrait appeler la période adolescente du mouvement. Cette période va de l'année 1885, où fut fondée la *Revue Félibréenne*, à 1939 environ, où la "vaillante revue marseillaise" intitulée *Le Feu* subit des transformations qui en faisaient, à toutes fins pratiques, un organe "occitan," ou bien "méditerranéen" au sens large, plutôt que strictement provençal. De ces deux publications particulièrement vivaces, et de quelques autres à titre subsidiaire, M. Roche a dégagé, je ne dis pas le programme des revendications méridionales, dont le détail n'eût produit qu'un catalogue insipide, disparate et bourbeux; mais, ce qui vaut beaucoup mieux, l'esprit de ces revendications. Il s'est livré, en d'autres termes, à un travail d'interprétation logique et psychologique, qui s'attaque aux questions fondamentales: querelles parfois acerbes avec le "Nord," "idée latine" et "mistralisme", débat sur les dialectes, défense de traditions diverses, littérature néo-provençale; qui, pour chacune de ces questions, met en relief ce qu'elles ont de viable et de caduc, et nous fait assister, sinon aux développements derniers du Félibrige, du moins au processus d'enrichissement ou de filtrage qui les a rendus possibles et plausibles.

D'abord s'accuse cette vérité, élémentaire peut-être, mais bonne à

dire et à redire, que la validité du régionalisme provençal tient dans une bien faible mesure à des conditions économiques ou à des coutumes populaires localisées. Que les unes et les autres soient présentes, et que les félibres s'en réclament, on le veut assurément. Leurs interminables plaidoyers en faveur des courses de taureaux fournissent à M. Roche l'occasion d'un chapitre plein de verve, mais aussi d'humour: car il n'échappe pas à son observation alerte que cette tradition, normalement vouée à disparaître comme la plupart des traditions, doit un regain de vigueur et un sursis inattendu à l'opposition peu judicieuse du Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Société Protectrice des Animaux. Tout compte fait, c'est l'esprit de rébellion et de contradiction qui l'entretient, nullement la conviction intime qu'elle est indispensable au bonheur des Provençaux. Ailleurs, dans un orgueil tout intellectuel, dans la conscience de représenter encore une civilisation autonome et authentique, réside le sentiment de leur supériorité. Il n'est pas, sur le territoire français, d'autre mouvement régionaliste qui puisse se parer du beau nom de "renaissance," pour la raison qu'il ne s'en trouve point qui ait un trésor linguistique, artistique et littéraire à redécouvrir. Il existe sans doute, un peu partout, des collines inspirées autant qu'inspiratrices dont l'oracle nous a été dûment et parfois génialement transmis. Mais leur message reste isolé, en ce sens que ne lui répondent nulle part, dans les profondeurs du passé provincial, des messages de même source et de même volée. Barrès ou Brizeux, à l'inverse de Mistral, n'ont pas d'ancêtres régionaux, pas de lettres de noblesse, pas d'instrument valable qui ne leur vienne de Paris.

Ainsi se justifie le beau distique du maître de Maillane: *Quau tèn la lengo tèn la clau / Que di cadeno lou delieure*. Ainsi s'explique l'héroïque tentative des félibres, appliqués à reconstituer, sur le plan littéraire, le patrimoine linguistique des aïeux. L'entreprise n'allait pas sans d'immenses difficultés que M. Roche, avec sa sagacité ordinaire, suppute à leur juste poids. Il en fait ressortir le côté utopique et arbitraire, visible dès l'instant que la langue écrite de Mistral, de Félix Gras et de Joseph d'Arbaud, langue épurée et simplifiée, s'éloigne passablement des idiomes locaux, et que, peu accessible par définition à la bourgeoisie francisante, elle ne l'est guère davantage au peuple patoisant. Au reste, dans les campagnes elles-mêmes, le dialecte parlé est en constante régression. On conçoit donc que l'agitation soulevée autour du "provençal à l'école," soit dans le dessein d'en perpétuer l'usage, soit tout au moins pour le faire servir à l'enseignement du français, n'ait abouti qu'à des résultats pratiques très minimes. Mais cet échec n'est pas sans avoir quelques côtés glorieux. La délivrance promise par Mistral s'est tout de même accomplie, sous la forme d'une moderne littérature d'oc qui a démontré son aptitude à produire des chefs-d'œuvre. Cette littérature en soi, et dans son contexte historique et social, s'est imposée comme objet d'études à l'échelon de l'enseignement supérieur. L'étranger vient à elle, lui accorde les honneurs du dictionnaire, accueille, en la personne de M. Roche précisément, l'un de ses interprètes les plus

autorisés. Littérature de vitrine si l'on veut, article de musée, elle n'en réfute pas moins, *ipso facto*, l'argument "nordique" selon lequel la langue du Midi, déchue et morcelée en une multitude de patois, serait au-delà de toute rédemption. Et soit dit sans paradoxe, elle renforce l'allégeance méridionale à la patrie française. L'antagonisme classique des "deux Frances," vivement dépeint par M. Roche, a pour son aliment le plus substantiel la notion, dès longtemps accréditée, que Tartarin ou Marius n'ont de choix qu'entre un français bâtard et un provençal dégénéré. On ne saurait plus prestement les asseoir entre deux selles. Leur amour-propre satisfait de manière ou d'autre, ils ont chance de se calmer.

Mais le régionalisme provençal possède encore ce trait, à de certains égards le plus frappant de tous, qu'au lieu de se replier sur lui-même, de rétrécir son horizon, comme le terme de "régionalisme" semblerait l'impliquer, il est doué, au contraire, d'un étrange pouvoir de propulsion. Il est, à vrai dire, si peu séparatiste, qu'il cherche spontanément et hors de soi des affinités électives—fondées sur une communauté de race à coup sûr, mais aussi et surtout de culture et d'aspirations. De l'idée de région, il a glissé sans trop tarder à l'idée de fédération, et, de cette dernière, à celle d'un bloc "méditerranéen" ou "pan-latin" qui ferait équilibre aux poussées pan-slave et pan-germanique. Le terrain, ici, est précaire plus qu'ailleurs, et il va sans dire que les félibres, lancés sur cette route aventureuse, ont hésité et trébuché à maintes reprises. M. Roche les suit imperturbablement en leurs tours, détours et contradictions, et, au terme de ce long dédale, soumet une fois de plus les conclusions du bon sens. Du bon sens et d'un peu plus encore, car le bon sens, à lui seul, ne lui aurait pas suggéré de laisser entendre que les extrêmes se touchent et que la chimère, à l'occasion, peut mystérieusement rejoindre le sens des hautes réalités. Il est exact, par exemple, que l'humanisme méditerranéen, naguère prôné de Paul Valéry, n'est pas un vain mot, encore que *Mare nostrum*, au cours des siècles, ait contemplé plus de conflits sanglants et de dissensions politiques que de manifestations de solidarité. Il est naturel que les adeptes du "mistralisme" aient quelquefois, en leurs rêves, annexé l'Amérique du Sud, et il est pour le moins diplomatique que certains d'entre eux, tel le baron de Tourtoulon, aient vu de bonne heure, dans l'alliance anglo-américaine, une des planches de salut de la "politique latine." Or, nous vivons assez tard, dans un monde assez vieux, pour ne plus sourire à l'excès de ces élucubrations et même pour y reconnaître une sorte de prescience. Le bloc occidental, dont il est tant question aujourd'hui, répond, somme toute, aux besoins défensifs que soulignaient jadis Mistral et ses amis. Il s'agit bien, ne fût-ce que sur le papier, d'un régionalisme fédératif et démesurément agrandi, reposant sur la conscience d'une civilisation commune et digne d'être préservée, civilisation dont les ingrédients ne sont pas purement latins, loin de là, ni même gréco-latins, mais où l'héritage gréco-latin tient cependant sa place et sa très grande place. Ceux qui la jugent trop faible malgré tout se font volontiers, on le sait, les avocats d'une "troisième

force," médiatrice entre l'Est moscovite et l'Ouest anglo-saxon. Si cette force se créait jamais—et le lieu n'est pas ici d'en apprécier les mérites ou les démérites—l'assertion fondamentale du Félibrige, qu'il existe un esprit latin, un tempérament latin, un génie latin pour tout dire, se trouverait triomphalement confirmée. Elle l'est déjà, apparemment, dans la pensée de M. André Siegfried, qui, Français du Nord, mais spécialiste éminent de la caractérologie des peuples, faisait à Paris, le 7 janvier dernier, une conférence intitulée: "La Psychologie des Latins."

J'en ai assez dit pour laisser soupçonner les incidences nombreuses et l'actualité latente du livre de M. Roche. Et du moment que la question du régionalisme se pose aux Etats-Unis, que l'antithèse Nord-Sud y demeure aussi nette que complexe, les lecteurs américains, dans cet ouvrage, découvriront matière à d'utiles rapprochements. Il fait honneur à l'Université Northwestern, bien que les presses de l'université aient manqué de lui faire tout l'honneur convenable en laissant subsister d'innombrables erreurs typographiques qui ne sont pas loin de le défigurer.

JEAN-ALBERT BÉDÉ

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The Parisian Stage: Alphabetical Indexes of Plays and Authors. Part I (1800-1815) Part II (1815-1830). By Charles Beaumont Wicks. Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1950 and 1953. Pp. xi + 89 and xii + 107.

Cette excellente compilation, dont on devine le dévouement et l'intelligente patience qu'elle a exigés, rendra les plus grands services aux historiens du théâtre français, et son utilité en sera encore accrue quand le Professeur Wicks aura mené à bien son projet de la pousser au moins jusqu'à 1850. Il faut féliciter l'Université d'Alabama d'avoir aidé l'auteur dans ses recherches, et la prier de lui continuer son concours. Nous voici déjà en possession d'un catalogue pratiquement complet de la production des théâtres de Paris pendant les trente premières années du XIX^e siècle. Sans doute, il ne reste pas grand' chose de toutes ces pièces (6099 se trouvent ici répertoriées) et nous n'avons gardé le souvenir que d'un bien petit nombre de leurs auteurs. Encore une bonne part ne nous sont-ils devenus quelque peu familiers qu'en lisant les ouvrages d'érudits comme Eugène Lintilhac ou Louis Allard. Mais on mesurera précisément l'écart inévitable qui sépare la réalité historique de l'histoire, si on compare à la volumineuse bibliographie de Mr. Wicks le nombre d'œuvres si, grand soit-il et si perspicace qu'en ait été le choix, auquel ont dû fatalement se borner les critiques les plus consciencieux. Le regretté Lancaster, qui avait tout lu, ou peu s'en faut, du théâtre du XVII^e siècle, avait eu soin de choisir une époque dont il ne nous est resté qu'un millier de pièces, et je me suis laissé dire qu'en s'attaquant au XVIII^e siècle, il avait reculé devant l'abondance des comédies. Il est à craindre que personne, et pas même une équipe, n'entreprenne

jamais une histoire complète, et qui, à bien des égards, serait un monstrueux monument d'ennui, de la littérature dramatique des cent cinquante dernières années. On se bornera, après les œuvres de premier et de second plans, à un écrémage qu'on déclarera représentatif. La bibliographie de Mr. Wicks n'aurait-elle que l'avantage de nous rappeler notre ignorance, elle serait déjà d'un profit certain.

Conçue très méthodiquement, elle donne, pour chacune des deux périodes de quinze ans qu'elle couvre, la table alphabétique des pièces: après un numéro d'ordre et le titre de la pièce, viennent, éventuellement le sous-titre, puis le genre, le nombre d'actes, l'indication prose ou vers, le nom réel du ou des auteurs (on trouvera les pseudonymes à la table des auteurs), le théâtre et la date de la première à Paris. Le Professeur Wicks a contrôlé de très près tous ces renseignements: il s'en explique dans sa préface, tout en regrettant que le manque d'espace l'ait empêché de les justifier. Je ne sais s'il lui eût été facile, par un système d'abréviations ingénieux, de nous renvoyer au moins à sa principale source d'information (la plupart du temps, un journal), mais, avec la date de la représentation, il sera souvent facile d'y suppléer. Ce que je regrette beaucoup plus, c'est que, pour les pièces oubliées (car, pour les autres, on sait où les trouver), il n'ait pas donné, toutes les fois où c'était possible, un moyen pratique d'en faciliter la lecture, non pas le nom de l'éditeur, qui serait ici de peu d'utilité, mais l'indication de la bibliothèque où elle figure; je ne crois pas qu'il lui aurait fallu beaucoup de place pour une mention comme *B.N.* (Bibliothèque Nationale) ou *A* (Arsenal); la plupart de ses articles réservaient à cet effet un peu de blanc à leur dernière ligne, et il aurait pu économiser encore de l'espace en simplifiant ses abréviations: à quoi bon conserver le mot *par* entre le titre de la pièce et le nom de l'auteur, et écrire *com.-vaud.* pour *comédie-vaudeville* alors que *CV* eût été aussi clair? Quoi qu'il en soit, l'instrument qu'il nous fournit est des plus précieux, et l'on espère qu'il servira.

La seule lecture de ce catalogue est des plus instructives et suscite des réflexions. La fréquence de certains sujets attire immédiatement l'attention; on constate à la fois des persistances et des nouveautés, des formes permanentes d'imagination et des préoccupations d'époque, parfois de vagues pressentiments. Que de *Henry IV*! mais, à la fin de 1830, une brusque poussée de *Napoléon*! Cinq *Jeanne d'Arc* au moins, mais deux *Washington* seulement. Bien entendu, il faut constamment garder présente à l'esprit l'idée d'une censure très sévère en matière politique et se souvenir des changements de régime. Comme à toutes les époques, la magie des nombres ne cesse pas de s'imposer dans les titres: *Les deux* . . . *Les trois* . . . *Les quatre* . . . sans compter les *Double* . . . ou les *Triple* . . . L'intérêt s'attache toujours aux conditions familiales ou sentimentales: très fréquents sont les titres où apparaissent la *femme*, l'*amant*, le *mari* (mais le *cocu* semble avoir été interdit), le *père*, la *mère*, l'*enfant*, le *fil*s, la *fille*, l'*oncle*, la *tante* . . ., mais

je ne trouve que quatre *belle-mère* . . . , plus une *Ecole des* . . . , et le *gendre* n'apparaît qu'au pluriel: *Les deux gendres*, *Les trois gendres* . . . Beaucoup de *Famille* . . . , beaucoup de *Mariage* . . . , et quelques *Noces* . . . , mais pas de *Divorce* . . . Naturellement, force *Amour* . . . , souvent accouplés avec une autre passion. On continue à lancer des *Valet* . . . On continue à ouvrir des *Ecole* . . . Mais l'époque marque sa prédilection pour les *Auberge* . . . , les *Ermite* . . . et les *Ermitage* . . . , les *Orphelin* . . . et *Orpheline* . . . , les *Château* . . . , et, entre 1812 et 1827, pour les *Hussard* . . . ! Déjà apparaissent les *Hôtel* . . . et les *Café* . . . , si exploités par la suite. Les situations stéréotypées se signalent dans les *Duel* . . . , *Retour* . . . , *Méprise* . . . , *Epreuve* . . . , *Intrigue* . . . et par toutes sortes de variations sur les mots *rival* et *faux* ou leurs dérivés. Un goût pour les souvenirs historiques fournit l'abondante série des *Une journée de* . . . , *Une matinée de* . . . , *La Jeunesse de* L'anecdote biographique sévit dans l'évocation des écrivains, artistes et comédiens du passé: il y a une quinzaine de pièces où Molière est censé revivre. On constate aussi un vif intérêt d'actualité pour les auteurs et les acteurs, dont les mœurs inspirent nombre de contemporains. Les auteurs de tragédies antiques semblent éviter désormais de se disputer les mêmes sujets, mais les auteurs de pièces historiques se font plus volontiers concurrence: 3 *Guillaume le Conquérant* en 1804 (on s'y attendait), 4 pièces sur Christine de Suède et 5 *Guillaume Tell* de 1828 à 1830. Sous l'Empire, des *Bataille* . . . , des *Siège* . . . , mais aussi des *Paix* . . . A noter la vedette donnée à des types devenus populaires: très nombreux *Arlequin* . . . , nombreux *Gilles* . . . , *Jocrisse* . . . et *Cadet-Roussel* . . . , quelques *Colombine* . . . , des *Figaro* . . . , des *Monsieur Botte* . . . On n'en finirait pas. On s'amusera enfin à trouver une saveur d'anticipation, souvent trompeuse, à quelques titres isolés comme *Le Faux bonhomme*, *L'Argent*, *Monsieur Sans-Gêne*, *Les Voitures versées*, *Androclès*, ou *le Lion reconnaissant*, *Ondine*, ou *la Nymphé des Eaux* . . .

La table des auteurs n'est pas d'un moindre intérêt. On peut négliger celle du premier volume, car elle a été intégrée commodément dans la table cumulative du second, qui, après chaque nom, renvoie à tous les numéros d'ordre: on peut ainsi, d'un coup d'œil, se faire une idée de l'abondance de chaque dramaturge. Cette table réserve des surprises. On s'attend bien à ce que Scribe y domine: il a à son actif 239 titres. Mais Brazier, avec ses 217 titres, n'est pas loin de l'égaliser à cet égard. J'ai eu la curiosité de voir ce qu'Allard en avait retenu: il cite 4 pièces de lui, toutes en collaboration, dont il donne un aperçu. Sewrin, dont Allard nomme une pièce, figure ici pour 121. Dupin, qui n'est même pas dans l'index d'Allard, a 118 pièces enterrées dans la mélancolique nécropole du Professeur Wicks. J'ai bien peur qu'elles y attendent longtemps la résurrection. Mais si quelques-unes des innombrables défunes sont un jour ressuscitées, elles devront un cierge à leur bienveillant intercesseur.

JEAN HYTIER

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Vers une explication rationnelle du Coup de Dés: Essai d'exégèse mallarméenne. Par Gardner Davies. Préface par Henri Mondor. Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1953. Pp. 208.

In *Un Coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard* Mallarmé wanted to execute nothing less than a work which would include all the possibilities of literary expression and thus be the literary masterpiece of mankind. But whether or not the "Poème" (as he sub-titled the work) really represents this lifelong vision has remained a question. Such close disciples as Paul Valéry (*Variété II*, p. 199), Paul Claudel (*Positions et propositions*, p. 123), Henri de Régnier (*Portraits et souvenirs*, p. 86), and Camille Mauclair (*Mallarmé chez lui*, p. 97), all use such terms as *tentative* and *essai* to characterize the Poem. Crowning this testimony comes the statement of the poet himself in a letter to André Gide (reproduced in *La Vie des Lettres* of April 1914, pp. 12-13) referring to his creation as "cette tentative, la première, ce tâtonnement."

In the face of this overwhelming evidence that the poet considered the *Coup de dés* as an approximation to, or sketch for, the real thing, Mr. Davies would have us believe that the poem is a quite separate and much less demanding enterprise.

But the work is what Mallarmé and his friends said it was, a tentative effort to put together with profound metaphysical speculation the results of a lifelong meditation on literary expression, using all the virtualities of language which he had discussed at length in his critical writings, *Divagations*, and in his book on English words, *Les Mots anglais* (which Valéry and Claudel have seen as the crucial approach to an understanding of the poet). The end product is highly specialized, or "hermetic" in the sense that a mathematical equation is hermetic to the non-mathematician, and hence requires concentrated study.

The would-be "Mallarmisant" cannot escape the full implications of his self-assigned task. Mr. Davies, in defying this principle, finds himself involved in some strange contradictions with his author and himself. The first, which is too far-reaching for anything more than a mention, is his concluding notion that *Un Coup de dés* is some kind of monstrosity of abstraction cloaked in poetry, or, as he puts it, giving "un caractère poétique non point à l'idée d'un Rêve particulier auquel il avait consacré sa vie, mais à la portée abstraite d'une création éventuelle." Why any genuine poet would bother accomplishing such a frigid task, except as sheer self-punishment, is hard to see; but in fact the poet himself in his preface speaks of his new genre as belonging to "la Poésie—unique source" and indeed, as we noted, added "Poème" to his title. In other words, while aware that the ambitiously metaphysical aspect of his endeavor in some sense strained the esthetic aspect, nevertheless he was in no sense willing to give up his attempt at a *synthesis* of intellect and beauty: something quite, if mysteriously,

different from the tinkering proposed by Mr. Davies. Granting, then, the poetic and ambitious nature of the creation, it is obvious that any exegete should commit himself to a study of the poet's artistic language rather than studying exclusively his flatly denotative statements. In this crucial respect Mr. Davies has, on the whole, abdicated. Where a true attempt, like that of any other modern approach to a poetic text, would find itself involved in the complex aura of associations around each of the words which Mallarmé so preciously surrounded with white, empty page, we get instead an attempt to pin down a meaning for each word by the meaningless (when isolated) device of lining up other uses Mallarmé made of the word, selected quite at random from the most diverse utterances. Mr. Davies thus finds himself continuously engaged in a process of converting poetry into prose.

A few examples should suffice. One of the first words of the poem, "l'Abîme" is used with obvious cosmogonic intent—the dictionary meaning of the term—as well as with various poetic allusions too numerous to detail here. Mr. Davies chooses, inexplicably, to make of it a mere backdrop ("décor") for the subjective and monotonously repetitive drama which he sees as the substance of the work: "Mallarmé choisit le mot *Abîme* pour désigner l'ensemble du ciel et de la mer où l'on ne distingue rien" (p. 85). This is just about *all* he says of a word which is so important in the true poem that Mallarmé capitalizes it (as he does only three other similar words in the whole text). This is not too surprising since less than half of this slender volume is given to actual textual analysis, the rest being taken up with arbitrary speculation about Mallarmé's "Hegelianism"—finally admitted to be negligible!—and with what Mallarmé had *intended* to write instead of writing.

The next example is more disturbing. Mallarmé uses the term *aile* ("wing") rising from the Abyss to infer a primal rhythm which, fleetingly, suggestively, takes on, partly at least, the poetic imagery of a wave of water in the prehistoric ocean, then gradually evokes a sail while the actor on this universal stage, man, slowly emerges into consciousness as a new "wave" of becoming. But Mr. Davies sees it this way: "Cette aile est formée par les lourdes nuées qui se pressent contre l'eau." Heavy clouds as a wing are poetically hard enough to swallow. But even on the grounds of such restrictive logic there is no consistency here: "SOIT/que/l'Abîme/blanchi/étable/ furieux/ sous une inclinaison/ plane désespérément/ d'aile" would, according to Mrs. Davies, refer univocally to a cloud, whereas even the most superficial impression gained is at least partly and no doubt primarily that of foaming water; for how could the Abyss as sky be "*under* an inclination"? And if *Abîme* means both sky and water, as I agree with Mr. Davies and the dictionary that it does, then why not admit that the whole text is rife with ambiguities, like almost any other poetic text, as we know at least since Empson? The next step would be to show that the term *plane* is certainly ambiguous and can with perfect logic and a good deal of added poetic tex-

ture be a verb referring to the "soaring up" of a wave; this meaning is borne out by the graphic configuration of the type, by the copulative *et* further down on the page which implies a preceding verb and by various other considerations. But Davies admits this kind of ambiguity only when it suits him, and at a time when we are unaware of the above problem: "il [Mallarmé] ne dédaignera pas, à l'occasion, de dérouter son lecteur par l'emploi de mots dont le rôle est équivoque dans la phrase" and he quotes Mallarmé himself to this effect. And now, astonishingly, he adds: "lorsque Mallarmé emploie comme adjectifs les mots *étale et plane*, il est légitime de croire que le piège fut tendu à dessein" (p. 77). But why didn't he say so when he discussed the word *plane*? The answer is that it would have changed the whole picture and complicated it immensely.

This is not the least of the strange contradictions which I noted as the price Mr. Davies must pay for his Procrustean approach. Similarly, he may be found giving a wrong interpretation to another text in an attempt to find a simple equivalent to some term in the *Coup de dés*, for example "cette voile alternative" on this same first full page of the poem. Again he gives a flatly denotative explication of *alternative* as meaning "substitute" and again one may ask why Mallarmé would use language in such an inexplicable and clumsy way. In the text he quotes—the only use he could find (Pléiade ed. p. 519)—the word *alternative* means not at all "substitute" as he claims but rather "alternative" or "one-or-the-other," or "double." This sense actually illuminates the real meaning of the poem importantly.

In sum, it should be clear by now that it is a difficult and unending task to criticize Mr. Davies' remarks because his method is not so much *wrong* as inadequate. Almost everything he says could have some relevance in a sufficiently thoroughgoing exegesis—and, indeed, *has* had in past exegeses; it is rather the attempt to reduce the whole creation to these trifles that marks his failure to contribute anything significant to Mallarmé study.

On the positive side, Mr. Davies is to be complimented on his generally lucid and attractive style, and a kind of sweet reasonableness which takes the sting out of a task so formidable to others. And we owe him a debt of gratitude for previous contributions in the field, notably an excellent critical bibliography which appeared in *French Studies* a few years back.

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REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Chrestomathie de la littérature en ancien français. Par Albert Henry. Berne: Editions A. Francke, 1953. Tome I: *Textes*, pp. x + 350. Tome II: *Notes, Glossaire, Table des noms propres*, pp. 175. Professor Henry's highly competent and very attractive chrestomathy, prepared for von Wartburg's *Bibliotheca Romanica*, covers Old French literature up to the middle of the fourteenth century. The sampling is broad (including, for example, *Gligois*, *Robert le Diable*, *Audigier*, *Lai d'Aristote*, *Proverbes au vilain*, *Sponsus*, *Coutumes de Beauvaisis*), yet thorough. In the total of 193 selections there are passages from 20 epics and 12 adventure romances, 17 examples of historical writing, and 13 extracts from scientific literature. The desire to cover all genres, periods, and regions, without favoring exceptional writers at the expense of the great commonplaces so characteristic of the Middle Ages, explains why some important authors are not more fully represented. There are no extracts from *Erec et Enide* or the *Lancelot* of Chrétien de Troyes, and only *Laustic* from the *Lais* of Marie de France. On the other hand, texts are provided to show the evolution of successful themes, notably: four versions of a passage from the *Alexis* (eleventh to the fourteenth century), and three stages of the theme of the birth of Alexander in the *Roman d'Alexandre* cycle. One misses some favorite poems, but, to compensate, one finds the music for several lyrics. The selections are chosen with care and are of adequate length (*Yvain* 459 verses, *Chastelaine de Vergi* 339). The small but clear print allows such octosyllabic poems as *Guingamor* to be printed in double columns with 88 verses on a single page.

Professor Henry, knowing the varying excellence and degree of conservatism of existing editions and having considerable personal experience in editing Old French texts, went to some pains to re-edit the selected passages, checking, wherever possible, the basic MS or a photographic copy.

La leçon de ce manuscrit, je la corrige dans une mesure assez variable, de plus en plus persuadé que je suis que chaque cas est un cas d'espèce . . . Cette leçon, je la corrige en profitant du travail des éditeurs et en tirant parti, sauf exception, de l'apparat critique des éditions; les corrections sont donc dues aux éditeurs, aux auteurs de comptes rendus et d'études particulières ou à moi-même . . . En principe, la leçon du manuscrit choisi n'est pas corrigée, si l'arbre généalogique seul nous invite à le faire; il y faut, en plus, des arguments d'ordre grammatical ou stylistique. (p. vi)

This is, to my mind, intelligent flexibility. Departures from MS are listed. As for "la toilette des textes" he has "en gros" followed CFMA practice.

The chrestomathy is best suited to European instruction where the student has his Latin, and is prepared to acquire morphology in the classroom or library. No paradigms are provided, despite the Bartsch-Wiese tradition, and the Notes, while excellent, are limited to the essentials, and definitely not as copious as we find in some very serviceable English editions. "Le glossaire, quoique abondant, ne dispense pas de recourir aux dictionnaires classiques de Godefroy et de Tobler-Lommatzsch." To be sure, the glossary is 50 pages long and has some references to the texts; but the student has to figure out for himself from context or philological background such words as *frid*, *kersun*, *leve(laver)*, *paist*, and *ruouet*. And if he relies on Godefroy for *espoillot*, he will get the verb "despoil" rather than "delouse" as in Tobler-

Lommatzsch. American teachers, planning to use this book in an elective course, had better provide additional aids. The brief paragraphs introducing the selections are very helpful and well done. (L.P.G.P.)

Gerbert de Mez: Chanson de geste du XII^e siècle. Edité par Pauline Taylor. (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de Namur, Fasc. 11) Namur: Secrétariat des Publications, Facultés universitaires, 1953. Pp. xlix + 448; 1 plate. The present edition of *Gerbert de Mez* brings to a conclusion the study of the four branches of the *Geste des Loherains* begun at Columbia University in 1930 under Professor Henri Muller. Considering the length of the poem and the size of the book, we must pay tribute to Professor Taylor's wisdom in reducing to a minimum the variants, notes, etc., which are the stock in trade of those who publish critical editions. Manuscript A (Arsenal, 2983) was chosen as the basis for this edition because it was the one used by Josephine Vallerie for her edition of *Garin le Loherain* and because it is one of the earliest copies and represents a more ample redaction of the poem. In all manuscripts the text of *Gerbert* follows that of *Garin*.

The changes in the text (approximately 325) are limited to those which Professor Taylor considers essential. Evidently the following must be typographical errors: *duremet* 9044, *losene* 6728 (*losenge*?). All examples of *Orliens*, except that on line 7661, are bi-syllabic. Possibly the word *fort* is omitted; cf. "... a Orliens la fort cit" 6121. The author repeats many verses in their entirety. One wonders if .ii. 7419, is an error since the same verse in 7440, 7462 has .iii. A note might have assured us of the correct reading of 7419. One syllable is lacking in 7319 but there is no note to this effect. *Roine* 9568, without a trema, is undoubtedly a typographical error. Consistency requires an exclamation point at the end of line 314. Perhaps because *viltaje* is the more common method of writing words having this root, *viutaje* 2534, and *vintance* 4349, were corrected to *viltaje* and *viltance*. *Viutaje* and *viutance* would be closer to the original. *Mulés* 7788, makes eleven syllables; *mules* would be satisfactory. *Que le* 7340, reads better as *Qu'ele*. Professor Taylor mentions that certain Picard and Lorraine forms are to be found in the text. Why, then, change *ondemain* 7784, 10610, *arasonnez*, 11822, but keep *villars* 6785? All are forms to be found in Lorraine.

The study of the composition, style and literary interest is brief but satisfactory. Of the 14,795 verses in the poem, 1797 were written by a second scribe. The study of the language of both scribes, nine pages, is limited to an indication of a few morphological and syntactical phenomena and to graphical alternations. Since the same phenomena are to be found in Miss Vallerie's study of *Garin*, this is adequate. There might have been mentioned the fact that the effacement of the sound of final *s* is the reason for the spellings *le*, 2867, 3060, *enporter* 6396, and *getera* 6419, all of which have been corrected except the latter. The missing verse which Professor Taylor could not locate is among the *ié* group which contains 1657 verses.

In the note referring to line 2303, Miss Taylor says: "A moins de compter le *e* final de *tierce*, le vers a neuf syllabes." The same could have been said of *conte* 1559, *apelle* 7646, and *force* 11391. Why is the reference in 3043 to Saint James of Compostella? It might be, but nothing gives a definite indication of this. On the other hand one might compare "... c'on quiert en Noiron Pré" 6158, "... c'on a Rome requiert" 8637.

One may accept Professor Taylor's reasons for the selection of words which

appear in the Glossary, viz., their particular meaning in the text, a doubtful meaning, their form. Yet this section of the work is not satisfactory. Since nothing is said about them except to give a definition, the following should be in the Glossary rather than in the notes: *chastel* 7151, *ocist* 7309, *dangier* 8575, *oirre* 9475, *recroire* 9543, *erras* 9688, *estraier* 9956, *avenant* 10723, *escriez* 14122, *aaisiez* 14637. Some words could easily have been omitted because the words themselves or their forms are found commonly in Old French and would be understood by anyone who has done reading in Old French: *aing*, *ale*, *arragons*, *putain*, *vernicies*, to mention but a few. The following might have been included for they are not too common: *nale* *que nale* 802, *retriboula* 2466, *montardiz* 2928. The only examples of *retribouler* quoted by Godefroy are from *Gerbert*. Line 6576 reads: "... si con hom en coupé." Why not the more common form *encoupé*?

Despite differences of opinion, we can be grateful to Professor Taylor for the work she has put into preparing this edition and assure her that her wish that she may thereby be of service to those who are working in the Middle Ages has, indeed, been fulfilled. (BROTHER CAMILLUS CASEY, O.S.F. St. Francis College)

Etudes sur la traduction française de la "Morale à Nicomache" d'Aristote par Nicole Oresme. Par Jan Pieter Hubert Knops. s'-Gravenhage: Uitgeverij Excelsior. 1952. Pp. 132. Il n'est guère besoin de souligner l'importance de l'œuvre de Nicole Oresme pour l'histoire de la langue, du style et des idées en France au XIV^e siècle. L'humaniste normand a, par ses traductions d'Aristote à partir des versions latines du Stagirite, contribué au premier chef à l'enrichissement du vocabulaire, surtout abstrait, et à l'assouplissement du français comme instrument de pensée. A. D. Menut publia en 1940 l'*Ethique de Nicomaque* telle qu'Oresme l'avait traduite et commentée en 1370 sous le nom de *Livre de Ethiques*. Cette édition présentait l'inconvénient d'être faite sur un seul manuscrit et de ne pas comparer systématiquement la traduction avec l'original: or une telle comparaison ne peut qu'être fructueuse pour étudier la formation du français littéraire et savant.

Knops, après avoir qualifié l'édition Menut d'"excellent instrument de travail" (*Neophilologus*, 27, 1942, 230-231), en est venu à douter de son exactitude. Il a entrepris de recenser à nouveau le texte, de le comparer avec l'original latin, d'étudier le commentaire: d'où la présente thèse de Groningue.

Le plan et l'intention en sont louables, l'exécution faible. Le français de la thèse est peu correct (par ex. p. 24, 226.2; p. 18, 178.14; p. 129, 1. 22 *serait-ce une exigence trop onéreuse aux dictionnaires de noter* etc.); les fautes d'impression ou de lecture abondent et je ne répéterai pas le relevé de H. F. Williams (*R P*, VIII, 2, Nov. 54, 158-160; les citations grecques sont en général mal accentuées, par ex. pp. 80, 81, 85). Plus grave est la confusion sous le plan apparent: par ex., les adjonctions qu'Oresme interpose dans sa traduction sont étudiées dans la deuxième partie, ch. III, puis la question est reprise dans l'appendice I; ailleurs, le même passage est écartelé entre la page 61 et la page 126; le problème abordé pp. 85-86 est renvoyé à l'appendice II, et les cas où Oresme clarifie Aristote, étudiés en II, VII, sont séparés des traductions explicatives (II, IV), alors que l'explication est dans les deux cas inspirée des gloses de Thomas.

La première partie (pp. 9-49) est une critique du texte de Menut: celui-ci n'avait prétendu qu'à donner le texte de B, sans plus; il est toutefois certain que les collations de Knops permettent d'élucider des obscurités du texte Menut (par. ex.

111.14; 119. Co 12; 122.6; 199.25; 214.1; 216.3; 252.15; 253. Co 2; 525.1; etc.); quant aux mélectures de Menut, l'apport de Knops est incontestable; pour ce qui est de la valeur de B, il ne démontre pas la supériorité des manuscrits qu'il utilise: sa collation donne des variantes plus importantes que Menut ne le laissait voir (cf. M. Roques, *Romania*, 67, 143) mais elle ne couvre que 4 manuscrits sur 17, et Knops n'a pas essayé de vérifier leur filiation, démarche préliminaire à toute critique; les raisons pour lesquelles il choisit une leçon et se fie à tel manuscrit ne sont pas toujours claires ni ne semblent toujours suivre les règles de Havet. En règle générale, les références à une traduction moderne ne prouvent rien: mais tant qu'à faire, la compréhension d'Aristote a fait des progrès depuis Thurot (1823) et Knops aurait aussi bien pu prendre la traduction de Voilquin (1940).

La troisième partie a pour objet de préciser les sources des gloses d'Oresme et particulièrement le "rôle prépondérant du commentaire de Thomas d'Aquin à ce sujet" (p. 87); malheureusement, l'auteur exerce un choix arbitraire, négligeant celles qui n'ont pas un "certain intérêt" et n'ajoutent pas "d'idée nouvelle" (p. 87), sans nous dire sur quels critères il se fonde pour les reconnaître. Il ne nous dit pas plus ce qui permet d'attribuer une glose à Oresme seul (par ex. p. 93, xx.4; 116, xvi.18). A ces questions de sources, l'auteur mêle des résumés de gloses dont on ne voit pas la nécessité, faute d'une reprise cohérente de l'ensemble (par ex. p. 112, xii.29; 113, xx.9; 118, ix.15 etc.). Critiquer l'attitude d'Oresme ou le choix de ses exemples est ne tenir compte ni de la perspective historique ni des connaissances de l'époque (voir p. 113, xix.2; 116, xvi.8; xvii.6; 120, iv.2; v.2, 7; p. 116, xv.17-18): les limitations dans les *exempla* choisis, de même que les allusions à des controverses et *uasoriae*, évidemment empruntées à la rhétorique latine, auraient pu être utilisées pour une intéressante évaluation des lectures et de l'information humaniste au XIV^e siècle.

Même caractère partiel, même absence de conclusion, même passage sous silence des problèmes essentiels dans la seconde partie. L'auteur y étudie la méthode de traduction d'Oresme, et c'est bien là le véritable intérêt de l'œuvre pour la linguistique et la stylistique. Knops aurait pu s'inspirer des études de Sturel (1909) et d'Huguet (*Revue du XVI^e siècle* XII, 44-77) sur les procédés d'Amyot. L'exposé s'ouvre sur les difficultés essentielles que rencontrait Oresme: son désir d'insister plus que l'original sur la leçon morale du texte, et la pauvreté du français quand il s'agissait de traduire d'un latin plus riche un texte déjà lourd de sens en grec. Cela n'a pas empêché Oresme de montrer un grand souci d'exactitude: ces doublets qu'on lui reproche prouvent assez son désir d'approcher le plus possible le sens d'abstraites difficiles, et ses décalques du latin, loin d'être dus à une admiration aveugle ou à la paresse d'esprit, sont une entreprise réfléchie d'enrichissement du vocabulaire français.

Il n'est pas jusqu'aux interpolations dans la traduction (pp. 56-58) qui ne prouvent une constante crainte de ne pas rendre assez l'esprit du texte, fût-ce au prix de quelques additions à la lettre. Le recours à l'interpolation trahit l'insuffisance du vocabulaire, mais représente un effort tangible de raisonnement sur le signifié et de travail sur le signifiant qui gagnerait à être étudié plus en détail.

Les procédés d'Oresme sont essentiellement l'explication (pp. 59-64), le doublet (pp. 65-69 avec le cas particulier d'un des éléments constitué par un simple calque du mot latin, pp. 82-86). Le calque semble indiquer que le néologisme est une création personnelle d'Oresme (Appendice II), mais cela semble exclure l'hypothèse

(p. 86) de calques "inconscients," et chacun demanderait une étude; là encore, l'échantillonnage de Knops ne rend pas inutiles ses prédécesseurs, même Meunier. Des statistiques comparatives nous auraient convaincu de l'original emploi du doublet; une étude plus serrée de ces synonymies ferait faire un grand pas à la sémantique historique (il faudrait distinguer la nuance simple, type *travail et laboure*, du couple révélateur tel que *droiturière et raisonnable*; Knops se contente d'expliquer des synonymes par un désir d' "épater le bourgeois" (sic, p. 69), ou de faire des allusions vagues au style (pp. 52, 76; et que veut dire le distinguo: pour clarifier ou par souci de style p. 74? et en quoi, p. 69, la postposition du doublet savant l'empêcherait-elle d'être éclairé par le mot populaire?).

Quant aux traductions explicatives, les exemples sont cités en vrac et commentés vaguement (par ex. p. 64 "assez libre dans le choix des mots", sans plus). Tantôt Oresme paraphrase un abstrait, tantôt il développe un texte condensé: une classification pourrait mener à une étude de la structure de la phrase, comme Bruneau l'a fait pour les traducteurs du XVI^e siècle; les variations dans la traduction des mêmes mots offriraient un répertoire du potentiel linguistique au XIV^e siècle; l'intérêt est plus grand encore en stylistique: il n'est pas toujours facile d'apprécier la valeur d'un procédé de style faute de bien peser les intentions de l'auteur, mais dans une traduction l'original (et ici, de plus, les gloses) dissipe les doutes sur ce qui doit être mis en relief, permet donc d'étudier beaucoup plus sûrement le mécanisme du style, et même, dans l'effort d'exactitude qui outrepassa le but, le passage de l'énoncé simple à l'énoncé expressif, de la langue au style.

Mais ces problèmes sont à peine suggérés dans un livre qui, dans son état actuel, n'est que l'incomplète esquisse du livre à faire. (MICHAEL RIFFATERRE, *Columbia University*)

Marivaux e il suo teatro. Da Ortensia Ruggiero. Milano: Fratelli Bocca Editori, 1953. Pp. 237. One of the most striking features of the curious history of Marivaux's literary reputation is the absence of Italian scholarly and critical studies on this writer indebted in no small measure to the *comédiens italiens* of Paris and to the tradition of the *commedia dell'arte*. And not only do the critics and scholars of Italy seem to have neglected him, but the reading public as a whole has shown Marivaux little more favor to judge by the general indifference toward his works, particularly the comedies, as pointed out by Natalie Melloni in "Marivaux en Italie," in *RLC*, III (1923), 109-111.

The present volume, therefore, may mark somewhat of a reversal of attitude in Italy. Of an introductory nature, it is, as the title indicates, a general study of Marivaux's dramatic works. Based on the latest findings up through 1952, it was of necessity unable to profit by the very important recent discoveries and criticism of Professor Frédéric Deloffre (*Revue des Sciences Humaines*, Nos. 1, 2, 1954). It is nonetheless a work of care and seriousness worthy of critical attention. It is divided into three general parts. Part One, devoted to Marivaux and his work, adds nothing new to our already existing knowledge.

Part Two deals with the comedies themselves. The author proposes a new classification of Marivaux's plays, thus adding another to those of Fleury, Larroumet, Fournier and Bastide, and Arland, who, she feels, group the plays according to mere conventional criteria of genre. Her grouping is based on what she calls an evolution of Marivaux as a dramatist, which starts with the classical tradition of comedy of

character, as in the first play, *Le Père prudent et équitable*, and continues to his more characteristic style of the comedy of love. While such an arrangement possesses merit, it is at the same time rather dangerous, since there is hardly a true chronological evolution of the type in Marivaux's development. Some of the love comedies, in fact, come before the so-called philosophical and social comedies, which she places before in her classification. She has divided the comedies into eight groups: comedies of character, social comedies, philosophical comedies, mythological comedies, fables, the surprises of love, the triumphs of love, heroic comedies and finally the single tragedy, *Annibal*. Her comments are generally thoughtful and sensitive. Through a reappraisal of certain of the lesser-known plays, she draws attention to the real dramatic and literary merit of some neglected aspects of Marivaux's work.

Part Three discusses characterization and dramatic technique. In some ways, this is the most interesting section of the book. Signorina Ruggiero shows herself to be a critic of insight in her discussion of character construction, in particular of the roles of the mothers and the lovers. Her chapter on dramatic technique and on *marivaudage*, on the other hand, has little or nothing new to say. Had she devoted more attention to structure, she might have come up with more revealing observations. There still remains a real need for a complete and careful structural analysis of Marivaux's comedies. The author also fails to come to grips with the very elusive problem of *marivaudage*. If the studies of Deloffre had been available, this section could have been more satisfactory. A chapter on Marivaux's debt to the *commedia dell'arte* would certainly not have been out of place in this study. It remains a lacuna in Marivaux studies yet to be filled. (ROBERT G. MARSHALL, *Wells College*)

The Embattled Philosopher: A Biography of Denis Diderot. By Lester G. Crocker. East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1954. Pp. 442. For those readers who have been discouraged by the early reviews of this work in various weekly magazines, it will perhaps come as a pleasant surprise to learn that the first biography of Diderot in English since Lord Morley's is considerably more than the chart of some eighteenth-century boudoirs promised by one weekly or the "jazzed-up" treatment suggested by another. It is a serious book, an attempt to combine the results of recent investigation with the exigencies of the modern reader.

The author's easy, rapid style and a narrative gift which rarely fails lighten the task of popularization. Footnotes and bibliography, the symbols of all that is unpopular, have been virtually eliminated, although acknowledgments are sometimes worked into the text. There is a thorough index, but no preface. Although he aims at a large public, the author has maintained an impressive respect for it in his approach: his chapters on the quirks of Diderot's philosophic and scientific thought, for example, are not condescending. Where necessary, the treatment is dense; moreover, the book is lengthy. Thus, if it falls short of the best-seller lists, the volume's respectful redefinition of what is popular will be the cause.

Professor Crocker's capabilities as an historian of ideas are well known, and he has used them here to excellent advantage. His main problem was one of organization. Yet from the mass of details available to the modern scholar he has brought convincing order where disorder had traditionally prevailed. Professor Crocker has achieved this largely through chronology with occasional pauses for atmosphere and flavor, such as Chapters X, "Diderot *chez lui*," or XIII, "Life among the

Philosophes." Elsewhere he may leave the narration momentarily in order to detail Diderot's wanderings in the arts and sciences, or in philosophy. In this connection the title of Chapter XII, "Two Novels," might permit the unfortunate inference that there were no other significant novels or novel-like forms in Diderot's literary trunk, since the works in question are *Le Neveu de Rameau* and *La Religieuse*.

In a presentation of this magnitude, which will introduce at least one generation of students to the controversial figure of the *Philosophe*, it is understandable, though unfortunate, that some errors should remain. Readers familiar with *Le Rêve de d'Alembert* will be surprised to learn that Julie de Lespinasse takes part in the first section of the trilogy (p. 320). Those who feel that *Est-il bon? Est-il méchant?* is Diderot's most interesting play will certainly regret the sole mention of the comedy as "a complicated but amusing dialogue in which some moral problems are put into dramatic form . . ." (p. 423). Whether out of delicacy or through oversight, the celebrated piggy-back ride of Madame d'Aine is recounted in a curiously inexact manner (p. 285). The key sentence, "Notre âme est un tableau mouvant, d'après lequel nous peignons sans cesse," is rendered as a moving picture "in which we are ceaselessly painting" (p. 106), a translation which puts Locke where he is not. Finally, a series of over-simplified references to Père Berthier ends by declaring him dead before 1767 (p. 256). Although Voltaire had "killed" him in 1759, Berthier's existence did drag on until 1782.

More important than these details, yet still of small consequence in this noteworthy volume, is an occasional failure on the author's part to outwit Diderot the dialectician. The brief treatment of paradox on page 191 does not take into account the opinion of recent scholars like Belaval who see in Diderot's paradoxes a means to knowledge rather than the sophisms of a cantankerous rebel. As a result, some time is spent in tracing actions and reactions which may never have taken place. Upon occasion a straw-man of Diderot's own making is laboriously kicked to pieces. Again, Mr. Cocker's ample treatment of the *Réfutation d'Helvétius* instills the work with a therapeutic force, for, as he sees it, "Helvétius' dehumanization of man shocked him [Diderot] into making concrete a feeling we can trace back to his earliest works: the feeling that man is something very special and distinct in nature" (p. 408). But it has not been satisfactorily proved that this "feeling" was ever anything less than "concrete"; it is not entirely convincing to find Diderot "shocked" into humanism.

The most general criticism that will be leveled at this biography will concern the bias indicated in the title. Since Professor Crocker is interested in Diderot primarily as a philosopher and encyclopedist, there results a certain neglect of Diderot as an artist. Of the four pages devoted to *La Religieuse*, two concern the circumstances of its composition and only one deals specifically, but weakly, with the artistry, listing character portrayal, background tableaux, and emotional eloquence. The six-page treatment of Diderot's potentially most popular work, *Jacques le fataliste*, explores the ethical position of its author, adds a paragraph summarizing recent remarks about the structure of the novel, and finally suggests that such ideas seek too far and "overwork his text with a naïve zeal for 'interpreting' seriously each humorous point" (p. 406). Such a handling of Diderot must invariably deprive him of a dimension that is rightfully his. Whether or not *Jacques* is a great novel, it is a great experiment; regardless of its success, it provides a vital insight into Diderot's lifelong obsession with the problem of reality and its imitation, an awareness which marks him as one of the earliest of the "modern" writers.

It is important that *The Embattled Philosopher* be considered, not a terminus, but a *mise au point* from which present scholarship may gratefully proceed. Written for the wide yet literate public, this biography will nevertheless give students in every field a chance to enter upon the study of Diderot with a command of the essentials. (RICHARD T. ARNDT, *Columbia University*)

Proceso y contenido de la novela hispano-americana. Por Luis Alberto Sánchez. Madrid: Gredos, 1953. Pp. 664. This book of Sr. Sánchez is the continuation and enlargement of *América, novela sin novelistas* published in Lima, 1933. The title of the present book explains the author's methodology. By the word "proceso" he means the origins of the genre, how it appeared for the first time in America, its relations with the novel of Spain and other countries. His main purpose here is to determine which are the authentic American elements and which have been borrowed from other literatures. By the term "contenido" he means the thematic aspects.

Sánchez writes in the introduction to the present book that my own classification of the Spanish American novel contained in my book *Novelistas contemporáneos de América* (novelists of the land, novelists of the city and novelists of the *modernista* movement) does not appear to be the most correct; therefore, he has adopted the following plan:

1. The novel as a general problem. 2. The novel as an American expression. 3, 4, and 5. The colonial novel. 6. The sentimental and idealistic novel. 7. The psychological novel. 8. The novel of imagination. 9. The autobiography. 10. The *costumbrista* novel. 11. Naturalism. 12. The regional forms. 13. The historical genre. 14. War novels. 15. The novel of adventure. 16. The political novel. 17. Biographical fiction. 18, 19, 20. The social novel. He even divides this last item in this way: the novel on immigrants, the anti-imperialist novel, the novel of the Mexican revolution, the agrarian and the urban novel.

Señor Sánchez himself has seen a serious problem in his own classification. Therefore he writes: "A novel rarely belongs exactly and completely to one style or theme; therefore I study it mainly where it fits best by its leading characteristics, but I cannot omit it in related chapters, although I try to avoid this process in order not to repeat the same title too many times. *La Vorágine* is, in my judgment, a regional novel above all, but it may be included also among the sentimental, naturalist, anti-imperialist, and agrarian novels."

Following this system Señor Sánchez shuffles more than a thousand novels throughout the 600 pages of his book, a really Herculean task, but he realizes this fact and explains the reason. (See p. 11 of *Proceso*, etc.) Over the twenty odd years it has taken him to prepare this book upsetting events have disturbed his work: sudden trips have taken him away from his files; some of his collections of books have been lost; the public libraries of Latin America do not have many of the books he needed, therefore "I had to find these in private libraries, being obliged to make very expensive trips without financial backing from anybody, trusting only in my own capacities as writer and professor and in the kindness of some colleagues."

Señor Sánchez ends his introduction by saying: "I am sure that no book has ever been published on this matter (the Latin American novel), which contains more information, and I am sure that nobody has ever attempted a more ambitious classification and interpretation."

Let us remember again that Señor Sánchez has not only read more than a thou-

sand novels written in Latin America but has had to compare them with others published in North America and Europe.

I agree with Luis Alberto Sánchez that his method, no matter how complete, is difficult to follow. Some of the novels that the author knows well are fully discussed and explained. Others are mentioned in many places, and at times it seems that one is reading an annotated bibliography. The same author appears in so many pages that the reader finally becomes familiar with him, but does not know if he is a romantic, a naturalist, a regionalist, or an agrarian writer.

One wonders what to do in order to avoid such difficulties in a book of this kind. Probably the best method would be to eliminate fifty per cent of the novels, many of them, according to Señor Sánchez himself, of inferior quality; or perhaps to center the critic's interest in a small group of distinguished novels and condemn the others to a mere bibliographical list. One thousand novels is a formidable number even in dealing with the richest literature of the world, but it seems to me an exaggeration in regard to the novel of Latin America. My criticism may be unfair, however, since I consider myself a champion of the "elimination process," while Luis Alberto Sánchez seems to favor the "multiplication principle." Some day I would like to write the History of Latin American Literature around the names of Garcilaso de la Vega, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Andrés Bello, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, José Hernández, Ricardo Palma, Rubén Darío, Rodó, Euclýdes, Machado de Assis, Graciliano Ramos and Ricardo Güiraldes. (A. TORRES-RIOSECO, *University of California, Berkeley*)

Leconte de Lisle: L'Homme et l'œuvre. Par Pierre Flottes. Paris: Hatier-Boivin, 1954. Pp. 159. This unassuming little volume is n°. 40 in the collection entitled "Connaissance des lettres" (formerly "Le Livre de l'étudiant") founded by the late Paul Hazard and now directed by Professor Jasinski. As the first title in the series is Professor Mornet's *Comment préparer et rédiger une dissertation pour la licence ès lettres*, its purpose is perfectly obvious. The competence of Professor Flottes to contribute the present work to the collection was established more than a quarter-century ago when he published *L'Influence d'Alfred de Vigny sur Leconte de Lisle* (Paris: Les Presses Modernes, 1926), and *Le Poète Leconte de Lisle* (Paris: Perrin, 1929). Indeed, the present book is, in the main, a simplification and condensation of the earlier biography, with the addition of a chronological list of the poems and an incomplete but helpful bibliography. Nevertheless, there are a few slight shifts in emphasis and changes in point of view, the chief of the latter being a very modest use of psychoanalytic terminology for the interpretation of Leconte de Lisle's poetry.

Professor Flottes makes two main points in his study: one is that, far from being the "impassible" he was commonly pictured during his lifetime, Leconte de Lisle was a passionately personal poet who masked his real feelings under a variety of disguises (one thinks of Vigny, who is called, p. 147, "une âme parente de la sienne"). Statements such as the following abound (pp. 39, 44): "Il se déguiserait moins s'il avait moins à cacher"; "Au cours de toute son œuvre, il semblera faire acte d'érudit, sans n'être jamais qu'un lyrique qui déguise ses traits et sa voix." Citing several verses from the poem, "Mille ans après," Professor Flottes imagines the youthful Leconte de Lisle hearing two conflicting voices (here, of course, one thinks of the Hugo of "Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne"), that of Night urging him to lose him-

self in Nature and that of the Wind calling him to action: "Tout Leconte de Lisle, ses aspirations contradictoires au bonheur impassible et à l'honneur de souffrir, ce qui désole sa vie et fait pour nous son charme, était en puissance dans cette minute, ardente et délicate, où il ne voulut pas choisir entre les appels contraires du Vent et de la Nuit" (p. 23). He had opted for action by becoming a contributor to the Fourierist periodicals, *La Démocratie pacifique* and *La Phalange*, and helping to prepare for the revolution of 1848, but he had been so crushed by the failure of the revolution that he had retreated into "le rêve," a forty-year dream of Beauty out of which grew the celebrated volumes of verse.

Though presented by Professor Flottes in a highly symbolic, and therefore subjective, manner, this is the usual interpretation of the poet's behavior before and after 1848. That it is not the only possible interpretation, however, is evidenced by another recent study, Dr. Irving Putter's *The Pessimism of Leconte de Lisle: Sources and Evolution* (University of California Publications in Modern Philology, Vol. 42, No. 1, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954). Professor Flottes disposes of the eighteen poems contributed to *La Phalange* in one short paragraph and concludes that "l'optimisme en était le dernier mot" (p. 27). Dr. Putter, on the other hand, carefully scrutinizes the poems which were not included in any of the published *recueils* and the later versions of those that were admitted to the canon, and his verdict is that the optimism of the Fourieristic compositions is "artificial," "exterior," "dutiful" (p. 102). (In *Le Poète Leconte de Lisle*, Professor Flottes had devoted much space to these poems but had arrived, p. 48, at the opposite conclusion that "Leconte de Lisle s'est abandonné au mouvement offensif qui emporte l'élite démocratique à la conquête du monde: c'est le même enthousiasme qui aiguise son arme de polémiste et accorde sa lyre de poète." Similarly, Marius and Ary Leblond, in their *Leconte de Lisle* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1906, p. 175) are convinced that "l'unanimité de ces poèmes révèle . . . le plus courageux optimisme"). The appreciative reader of *Leconte de Lisle* will have to decide whether the question is still moot.

Professor Flottes' second point need not detain us unduly as it is suggested rather than labored. I am referring to his application of psychoanalytic reasoning to the interpretation of Leconte de Lisle's poetry. The violently pessimistic reaction caused by the "échec de 1848" took the form, Professor Flottes contends (pp. 48-50) of an "aspiration au grand Retour," "le retour à l'Île, symbole de la Mère," "retour au Non-Etre original, au repos non troublé de la vie pré-natale, qu'il appelle la Mort." For the poet marked by the "traumatisme de la naissance," "la vie individuelle sort des eaux amniotiques" (hence references to the sea in the so-called "Vedic" poems, where they are inappropriate). The purely speculative character of such reasoning is proved by a comparison between Hugo and Leconte de Lisle, the former of whom is called "un lutteur, exempt de la marque traumatique si fortement empreinte sur le second" (the author either has not seen or does not set much store by Charles Baudouin's *Psychanalyse de Victor Hugo* [Geneva: Mont-Blanc, 1943]).

Although Professor Flottes quotes derogatory judgments on Leconte de Lisle like Laurent Tailhade's "ce bibliothécaire pasteur d'éléphants" (p. 5), it goes without saying that he himself has nothing but admiration for the poet on whom he has written so many deeply felt pages. His final chapter, "la Religion du Beau," is a detailed analysis, liberally sprinkled with statistics, of the poet's artistic techniques intended to guide the student towards the proper appreciation of his verse. This reviewer, for one, is disposed to accept Professor Flottes' conclusion that

Leconte de Lisle was thinking of himself when he wrote the final sentence of his 1864 essay on Vigny: "Un homme riche de facultés exquises, qui a vécu dans une retraite studieuse et volontaire, absorbé dans la contemplation des choses impérissables et qui s'est endormi fidèle à la religion du Beau," and his comment on this statement: "jugement dont presque chaque mot s'appliquerait à l'auteur des *Poèmes barbares*." (AARON SCHIFFER, *University of Texas*)

Maupassant the Novelist. By Edward D. Sullivan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954. Pp. xv + 199. This work performs an important function of research, the illumination of what has been spontaneously felt and uncritically published. Professor Sullivan treats the widely held opinion that Guy de Maupassant's novels are inferior to his shorter fiction. He does not alter that conclusion, but he contributes greatly to a better understanding of the why's and wherefore's lying back of it.

The illumination mentioned above comes from two sources. First, the newspaper articles written by Maupassant during a good share of his literary career, published particularly in the *Gaulois* and the *Gil Blas*. The reading public had been given a taste of these *chroniques* in René Dumesnil's *Etudes, Chroniques, Correspondance* (Paris, s.d.), included as the last volume in the Librairie de France edition of Maupassant's *Oeuvres complètes*. Certain other scholarly works had also treated them incompletely. We are indebted to Professor Sullivan, however, for the first inclusive study of these writings, so important for an understanding of Maupassant's intellectual and artistic development.

The author has chosen to sift from such miscellaneous material everything showing Maupassant's considered judgment about the art of novel writing. In so doing he has followed a chief thread of literary interest in the *chroniques*, since Maupassant there neglected the *nouvelle* in order to specialize on longer fiction, which presented a much more serious challenge to his abilities as a writer of fiction. The task of thus extracting the habitual and essential doctrines of a writer from journalistic articles primarily reflecting passing mood and transient interests presents great difficulty, which the author has overcome in an admirable fashion.

Secondly, fresh light is thrown on the subject through a detailed consideration of each novel written by Maupassant. In this part of the study two questions are answered: "What aim had the author of this work in composing it?"—Here the *chroniques* are again drawn upon—and "To what extent did the techniques employed realize that aim?" This approach, involving both subject matter and construction, could hardly be bettered. Using it, the author reaches the conclusion, among others, that *Une Vie*, despite the pathetic appeal of its suffering heroine which held such strong fascination for Tolstoy, is essentially an inferior work.

At times perhaps some extension of the conclusions might prove desirable. For instance, the chapters on *Fort comme la mort* and *Notre Cœur* convey the notion that Maupassant's failure in these novels arose from his social dissipations and his physical aging. While that statement is undoubtedly true, is it not somewhat an oversimplification?

Maupassant had lived from birth through early manhood as a magnificent physical animal. Zola described him in *Une Campagne* as "un fier mâle" whose works express "—un désir sain et fort, les amours libres de la terre, la vie largement étalée au soleil." On the basis of that living, the bulk of Maupassant's short stories and

the novels through *Pierre et Jean* were produced. Then their author's literary celebrity brought him into contact with the more delicate, cultured circles of French society, the very people whom Hippolyte Taine in a critique of *Une Vie* had proposed as a challenge to him. Sensing, yet without fully understanding, it seems, the combined fine-grainedness and complexity of these individuals, Maupassant was tempted to write about them. However, he lacked the intimate feel, the *recul* and perspective, necessary for doing justice to these new acquaintances. No wonder, then, that he noticed only their surface frivolity and corruption. Such considerations, barely hinted at by Professor Sullivan, would seem necessary to explain more fully the failure of *Fort comme la mort* and *Notre Cœur*. They do not, however, imply that if Maupassant had lived a normal life span and continued his contacts with the upper reaches of French society he might not later have developed from being merely a depicter of the primitive into a successful interpreter of highly civilized men caught in the confusion and tensions of modern living.

In this connection, Professor Sullivan has noted with great perspicacity a striking characteristic of Maupassant. He was an evolving personality, moving through cycles of very considerable change even after reaching full maturity. That fact finds expression in his novel writing. Its first period extended from *Une Vie* through *Mont-Oriol*, being characterized by an objective approach on the author's part toward his material. *Pierre et Jean* represented a blending of objectivity and psychological description. Then came the novels of psychological analysis, *Fort comme la mort* and *Notre Cœur*, with the fragment *L'Ame étrangère*, destined to move along the same lines. Finally, a short time before his death, Maupassant completed the circle by returning, in the uncompleted *Angélus*, to his earlier and successful objective approach.

These analyses run in nervous, highly lucid prose. Some of them, particularly that of *Pierre et Jean*, reach, both from the standpoint of generalization and of expression, a high standard of excellence.

It is difficult to find fault with this book. Its title was disappointing, since it does scant justice to the relationship between Maupassant's *chroniques* and his novels, which constitutes one of its most original features. However, that remains a minor point. In general, Professor Sullivan has here performed a fine service to American scholarship. Besides, he has opened up fresh fields for further investigation. Among other things, a complete edition of the *chroniques* would be greatly welcomed by *Maupassantistes*. We shall be looking forward to new contributions from this writer's pen. (GILBERT MALCOLM FESS, *University of Missouri*)

Le Romantisme contemporain: Essai sur l'inquiétude et l'évasion dans les lettres françaises de 1850 à 1950. Par la Princesse Marsi Paribatra. Paris: Les Editions Polyglottes, 1954. Pp. 190. Ce livre, respectueusement placé sous le patronage de professeurs en Sorbonne, semble avoir constitué une thèse de doctorat d'Université. S'il en est ainsi, l'ombre de ces maîtres de précision, de pénétration et de rigueur que furent Lanson et ses collègues et disciples a dû bien souffrir! On ne saurait imaginer de livre plus confus, plus désordonné, plus démesurément ambitieux, plus gonflé d'inanité. Sa plus précieuse utilité, s'il trouve des lecteurs, pourrait être de détourner les apprentis de l'histoire littéraire de défauts caricaturalement étalés.

L'ouvrage touche à tout. L'auteur a tenu à lire, et souvent à citer, un livre de

chacun des auteurs français de 1850 à 1950 qui sont mentionnés dans le *Manuel bibliographique* de Lanson ou l'*Histoire de la littérature française du Symbolisme à nos jours* de Clouard. D'où des centaines de menues citations découpées et juxtaposées. Aucun effort pour analyser, peser, interpréter. C'est évidemment la littérature mise en salade.

Les thèses de l'auteur semblent être en gros: toute la littérature depuis un siècle et demi est romantique, Anatole France seul excepté; le romantisme est un phénomène général, une maladie de la société entière. Il se ramène à un pessimisme effréné, un culte de l'irrationnel, une ruée vers les extrêmes. "Le romantisme . . . est l'ensemble des formes mentales et spirituelles de la société en voie de mutation qu'est la société des deux cents dernières années."

Les vérités premières pleuvent au passage, les généralisations péremptoires abondent, la littérature depuis cent et même deux cents ans est partagée en deux courants, existentialiste (ce qui pour l'auteur semble vouloir dire pessimiste) et surréaliste (c'est-à-dire dénonçant l'absurdité du monde). Le catalogue des évasions est dressé: évasions dans la nature, dans la ville, dans l'exotisme, dans le temps, dans la perversité, et une bonne douzaine d'autres.

N'insistons pas. Mais soupignons après l'époque où travaux universitaires, à défaut de génie, de prédication et de prophétisme, incarnaient du moins les banales vertus d'honnêteté, d'approfondissement consciencieux, de solide artisanat, de modestie. (HENRI PEYRE, *Yale University*)

Jean Giraudoux, Surrealism, and The German Romantic Ideal. By Laurence LeSage. (Illinois Studies in Language and Literature: Vol. XXXVI, No. 3) Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1952. Pp. x + 80. This book is overtly not concerned with sources or influences, but with the "esthetic affinities" (p. vii), the presence of which it proposes to show between the German Romanticists (Schelling, the Schlegels, as well as Tieck, Novalis, Jean Paul, etc.) on the one hand, and, on the other, Giraudoux (chapter I), the Surrealists (chapter II), and a wide and diversified array of twentieth century French writers (chapter III), including such odd bed-fellows as Gide, Valéry, Alain-Fournier, Péguy, Suarès, Proust, etc.

The method used consists largely in confronting short quotations, a copious collection of which is culled from numerous original works and secondary sources. These quotations are usually in the form of theoretical or critical pronouncements, and are sufficiently well chosen to reveal that a familiarity of some kind links the two groups of writers under study, thus reinforcing the position of those of our contemporaries who hold that, in France at least, the Romantic age is not yet closed.

These quoted statements, however, are usually so huge in implication and of so general and universal a nature that the reader cannot but feel that external evidence of this kind is insufficient to prove any profound "esthetic affinity." Their almost exclusively doctrinal contents also preclude any positive conclusion applicable to the same writers' creative works, for one may wonder whether, in the field of literature, mere doctrinal affinities are ever meaningful. Seemingly aware of this shortcoming, the author inclined more than once to venture beyond the realm of theoretical speculations, and to interpret much of recent French literary works as illustrating in a creative way the critical views of the German Romanticists: "Giraudoux's relation to the Romantic school is that of a fulfillment of their theory rather than that of an imitator of their works" (p. 36).

This notion of fulfillment seems to imply an element of intentionality, which may be admitted in the case of a few of Giraudoux's works, but which appears perilously misleading when it is meant to include allegedly the whole of contemporary French literary production: "Literature in France in the twentieth century appears as a fulfillment and elaboration of the theories enunciated in Jena and Heidelberg a century earlier" (p. vii). Professor LeSage's book fails for several reasons to demonstrate convincingly this proposition stated in its foreword. One of these has to do with the method used: the study, being constantly focussed on the German Romanticists, fails to recognize the existence of other powerful fountainheads (classical antiquity in the case of Giraudoux, scientific psychoanalysis in that of the Surrealists, or Bergsonism in that of many of the writers discussed in the third chapter, to mention only a few obvious ones). Another reason is historical: the impact of German Romanticism on twentieth century French literature—which, admittedly, is considerable—often made itself felt indirectly, through numerous intermediaries which should perhaps have been considered in this instance. If Breton, for example, felt so strong a kinship with Arnim, was it not because the German writer appeared to the French one as fitting eminently well a conception of literature which he, Breton, had already evolved under entirely different auspices? A final and more properly esthetic reason may be that theoretical pronouncements alone usually are of little effect in the evolution of literature. New literary forms are, in final analysis, more likely to be bred by previous literary forms, than by works of literary doctrine. This book, however, chooses to concentrate especially on the latter, either because of the alleged "dearth of poetic monuments" (p. 61), or because the German Romanticists' "own creative efforts are disappointing" (p. 78).

In spite of these reservations, one welcomes Professor LeSage's new book, because it cannot fail to raise such questions and to stimulate, therefore, interesting reflections on these problems; because it deals with a subject of considerable scope (too considerable perhaps for a limited treatment such as this one); and finally because it will find its natural place among an already impressive and almost unprecedented number of recent studies devoted to Franco-German literary relationship. (GEORGES MAY, *Yale University*)

The Culture of France in Our Time. Edited by Julian Park. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1954. Pp. xiv + 345 + ill. Je doute qu'il existe en France, à l'heure actuelle, un manuel comparable à celui-ci, et qui rassemble, dans le cadre d'un seul volume, un tableau aussi complet de la culture française contemporaine; ultra-contemporaine, devrais-je dire, car les auteurs, écrivant en 1953, n'ont pas craint de s'aventurer jusqu'au bord des manifestations les plus récentes dans les domaines artistique, pédagogique et social. On trouvera là, sur les générations nouvelles de poètes, de peintres et de musiciens, sur les prêtres-ouvriers, sur les dernières réformes universitaires, sur la presse d'après-guerre, etc., des renseignements qui ne figurent nulle part ailleurs, je veux dire sous cette forme commode et concentrée. Les articles consacrés à la France dans l'édition 1951 de l'*Encyclopedia Americana*, articles qui ont fait l'objet d'un tirage à part de diffusion malheureusement restreinte, avaient et conservent la singulière vertu de donner une des meilleures vues d'ensemble qui soient en anglais de la civilisation française à travers les âges. Mais, de par sa nature même, cette entreprise s'interdisait une étude particulièrement approfondie du temps présent aussi bien que les formes libres et élégantes de l'"essai": en sorte que,

si le travail du professeur Park et de ses collègues est destiné à vieillir plus vite, il est aussi destiné à nous procurer plus d'agrément.

D'où ne suit pas que les essais contenus dans ce volume soient tous d'égale qualité. Il n'est effort collectif qui n'accuse un certain nombre de disparates, et celui-ci n'échappe pas à la règle. Je n'aurai pas la mauvaise grâce de dresser ici un palmarès et me contenterai de souligner à quel point la souple formule adoptée par l'éditeur permet des variations de procédure et de ton: ce qui peut nuire à l'unité de l'ensemble, mais ne manque à coup sûr ni de charme, ni de piquant. Il est des contributions, notamment celle de Germaine Brée (*Littérature*), qui s'adressent visiblement à un public de connaisseurs délicats et presque d'initiés; il en est d'autres, comme celles de Julian Park lui-même (*Presse, Education, Droit, Religion*), qui ont une physionomie plus proprement scolaire et sont des pages de *college textbook* par excellence. Au surplus, il est curieux de voir comme les collaborateurs français: Germaine Brée en quelque mesure, mais surtout Gaston Berger (*Philosophie*) et Jean Mayer (*Science*), affichent un souci commun, congénital si j'ose dire, de rechercher la perspective historique, d'éclairer le présent par le passé. En revanche, les collaborateurs anglo-saxons, — il est un Anglais parmi eux, — inclinent davantage, parfois, non toujours, au prix d'un certain décousu, à plonger *in medias res*, à saisir intuitivement les qualités de notre époque. Ce trait distingue l'essai extraordinairement substantiel et perspicace de Barbara Ives Beyer (*Arts plastiques*) et se retrouve dans ceux de Julian Park déjà nommé, de Wallace Fowle (*Théâtre*) et de Rollo H. Myers (*Musique*).

Aucune odeur suspecte de panégyrique ou de propagande tout au long de ces pages alertes et nourries. Mais l'impression d'ensemble qui s'en dégage, fort bienvenue en vérité, est tout de même celle d'un hommage international, sobre et discret, à la vitalité intellectuelle et artistique d'une nation que ses épreuves n'ont point abattue. (J.-A. B.)



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